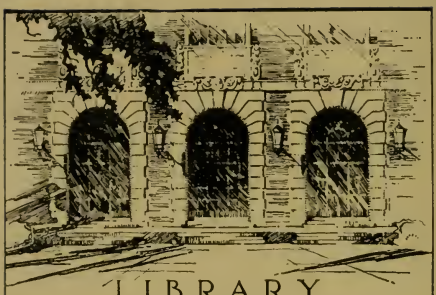

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CARTOUCHE,

THE

CELEBRATED FRENCH ROBBER.

BY

R. B. PEAKE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

"Some authors in the vain attempt to be *cutting* and *dry*, give us only that which is *cut* and *dried* "—LACON.

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A FEW WORDS BY WAY OF

PREFACE

TO THESE VOLUMES,

MOST RESPECTFULLY ADDRESSED TO THE SHADE OF

DON FRANCISCO

DE QUEVEDO VILLEGAS,

CAVALLERO DE LA ORDEN DE SANTIAGO,

ETC., ETC., ETC.

PUISSANT SPECTRE,

Once Lord of the town called *Villa de la Torre de Juan Abad*, a Palatine of Spain, possessing the authority of life and death on your tenants and vassals, born of the class termed *Senores de Horca y Cuchillo*—"id est," lords with power of hanging and beheading: You, on earth, GAY

Ghost, mastered higher qualifications and gratifications; for your biographers have recorded that your proficiency in the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, and French languages was pre-eminent. That you have "touched the Spanish," we all know; that you have touched the English, I fear it must be owned, that we have been but partially charmed with your wit, pleasantry, and humour.

Comical Shade, your fun was peculiar, your style had great breadth, but being a poet of estate, you could afford to "go your lengths;" and notwithstanding you were in high feather with the Conde Duque de Olivares, Prime Minister to Philip the Fourth, you suffered several years' imprisonment by way of taking off the keen edge of your satire.

Facetious Phantom, we live in times, thank Heaven! (where you now, of course, are inti-

mate) when stone walls do not form the bindings of literature, though it must be confessed that we still have books bound in *marble*, which is certainly somewhat better than having them bound in RUSSIA!

Pardon these puns, Lord of hanging and beheading, and condescend to listen why I have ventured to address these volumes to you. THE HISTORY OF PAUL, THE SPANISH SHARPER, from your racy pen, was written with the intent that the tale should point a moral; and I have humbly endeavoured throughout my story, to prove that rascality can never be permanently successful; and, although a villain may for a brief period triumph in the issue of his nefarious deeds, the following day or hour brings its defeat and punishment: and that neither a learned education, nor brilliant talents, can make a young man thrive in the world, should they be unaccompanied by just and honourable feelings.

Moreover, it may be that I address you, because I would endeavour to place myself in comfortable juxta-position with the reading few and the discerning many; and own at once, that, CARTOUCHE-like, I have ventured to *steal* from your depository. The robbery is not very extensive, but you have described the ragamuffins of Spain so charmingly, that I could not resist transporting some of their *shades* across the Pyrenees.

I remain,

PUISSANT SPECTRE OF QUEVEDO,

(A humble admirer of your inimitable humour; and more candid than many other gentlemen, who have liberally stolen from you;)

Your servant, much indebted,

THE AUTHOR OF CARTOUCHE.

Queen's Elm, May 1, 1844.

THE

ADVENTURES OF CARTOUCHE.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH, PARENTAGE, AND EDUCATION—JESUITS' COLLEGE—EARLY PROPENSITIES—MY FRIEND THE COUNT—MONSIEUR FUSEAU—CARTOUCHE'S FIRST SERIOUS PREDATORY ADVENTURE—ITS RESULTS.

Louis Dominique Cartouche was born Anno Domini 1693, in that elegant quarter of Paris, then called La Courtille, near the fountain Aux Echaudes. His father was by trade a cooper, and the intention of the worthy parent was that Louis Dominique should in time follow his calling; but it hereafter proved that the younger Cartouche succeeded in making quite another

sort of *butt* to those which were manufactured by his father, who, though poor, was an honest man.

We are apprehensive that a vast portion of the genius of craftiness and intrigue was inherent in the brain of the mother of Louis Dominique, at the period of her conception; and that the son, like a certain young author of the present day, could avow (as he did publicly) "I know who my mother is, but I am extremely puzzled as to the identity of my father."

Louis Dominique Cartouche was soon discovered to be a child who possessed abilities. Even at the early age of seven, in his little wanderings about the courts and alleys of the quarter in which he resided, he never came home without bringing his mother a present, such as a bunch of turnips, a sausage, a piece of salted fish, or anything that was portable, soup excepted, as portable soup had not at that period been invented. We do not positively affirm that the boy purchased these articles, but he had ac-

quired a most ingenious mode of watching when the owner's head was turned another way, and then whipping off the object he coveted. In fact, Louis Dominique was like the young stork, which, as it has been affirmed by some naturalist, supported its aged parents.

Some of these trifling appropriations having been discovered, the honest cooper became rather alarmed, for he observed that his only son and heir was the victim of a propensity that might one day prove fatal to him, for he could neither keep his hands from picking and stealing, nor his tongue from evil speaking, lying, and slandering. So he thought (with the approbation of Madame Cartouche) that he had better send him to the school at the college of Clermont, at that period under the able direction of the order of Jesuits.

It may appear strange that so humble an individual as Louis Dominique Cartouche could have found his way into the college founded by William Duprat; but it must be remembered

that it was a part of the crafty principles of the Jesuits, that the schools were equally open to the plebeian as well as to the noble. The pupils were taught gratis: some of the freethinking wits of the day were of opinion that it was about an equivalent for the education administered: and, as for the qualifications of Cartouche, so far as health, no grievous deformity, or mutilation, and the possession of natural abilities, he was everything to be desired. But then certificates of good conduct were required.

These his mother procured from several old ladies, of easy virtue, of her acquaintance.

Our hero accordingly fell under the tuition of the fathers of that celebrated society, that were said to have excelled in the art of taming man. It was wonderful the power they always obtained over their fellow men, and yet their whole society was upset by ONE woman!

Had Father de Sacy been less rigid to Madame de Pompadour, the order of Jesuits would not then have been suppressed in France; but such

was the morality of the period, that the breath of an incensed concubine was of sufficient avail to waft away, for ever, many thousands of pious and learned men, and to devote them to dependence and poverty; and which led to the ultimate dispersion, in other countries, of the erudite disciples of Ignatius Loyola.

Well, Louis Dominique was provided with his primer, and essayed in sundry copy-books those hieroglyphics named by the learned, "pot-hooks and hangers," and which appertain peculiarly to French penmanship. Cartouche literally studied under a writing-master, who flourished in the seventeenth century.

It is a fact in natural history that wherever boys congregate, fruit-stalls follow. Most of the pupils of Clermont College were the sons of reputable citizens of the good city of Paris; there were a few black sheep in the flock, as there must be in all large seminaries. But many of the youths were provided by their fond parents with pocket-money. The treasury of

Cartouche *père* being nearly as empty as his own tubs, it must be evident that Louis Dominique was without any other pecuniary resources than those which his own industry could supply. The boy, too, was not only partial to fruits of all sorts, but had a stomach always craving, and of a most rapid capacity for digestion. If he contrived to drive the wolf from his door, he never could make it emerge from his belly. The ingenuity of Louis Dominique was always on the stretch to obtain apples, pears, peaches, plums, grapes, or chesnuts, on gratuitous terms; at one time he would, as he approached a stall, raise a cry that a mad dog was coming down the street, and while the *marchandes du fruitage* turned their terrified heads, Cartouche seized as much as he possibly could, and rushed into the gates of the college. At another period, in cold weather, his appetite became so excited by the scent of some chesnuts that were roasting on an iron dish over a charcoal fire, that he could no longer resist the temptation, and having

reserved a small quantity of gunpowder, from a cartridge he had stolen from a *mousquetaire*, he contrived with great address to throw it, screwed tight in a piece of paper, on the burning embers; the result of which was a flight in the air of the dish of chesnuts, and the supposition of the poor vendor that she was tormented by his Satanic majesty; as a matter of course, Cartouche was on the look-out to profit by his exploit, and picked up hot chesnuts in all directions. In fact, so successful was he in these depredations that he became a *stall-fed* beast. With these chesnuts in his various pockets he had to scamper into the college school, and stand up with his class for the Latin lessons; when his worthy tutor would wonder why he could not stand still, little dreaming that the boy kept fidgetting from one side to another, to try to relieve his person from the scorching influence of the burning chesnuts.

In after life, when the rigour of prison had subdued Cartouche, and his approaching execu-

tion was before his eyes, he avowed, that the facility with which he contrived to plunder these poor apple-women was the cause of all his future crimes; for, being so successful in his first essays, he was emboldened to attempt robbery on a scale of greater magnitude.

An ingenious writer (Monsieur Mesange du Marais) has imputed a robbery to Cartouche, at an early period of his sojourn at the college of Clermont, which we cannot conscientiously believe to have happened. He said that Cartouche made a general swoop of one hundred and twenty nightcaps belonging to his school-fellows, which he subsequently sold.

We are not quite prepared to give credit to this anecdote, though related by so respectable an authority as Monsieur Mesange du Marais, because we do not imagine that there were one hundred and twenty nightcaps amongst the whole number of boys in the school, many of whom had heads but no caps, whilst others had caps but no heads.

Amongst the latter was a youth about the same age as Louis Dominique, a younger son of the Count Conconnas; and although this little nobleman was compelled to be as plainly dressed as any of the other boys during the period he studied at Clermont College (a regulation strictly enforced by the directions of William Duprat, the founder), he was allowed plenty of pocket-money by his father: and the sly rogue, Cartouche, perceiving what Conconnas expended, determined that part of his revenue should pass through his own hands.

Louis Dominique accordingly beat about the bush to see how he could obtain the confidence and affection of this young sprig of nobility. He had no money to purchase any little present for him, but an opportunity soon offered whereby he could prove his *personal* regard; for as Father Balthasar, one of the tutors, was crossing the court-yard, which served the boys as a play-ground, he received a hard blow in the fattest part of his loin (he was a corpulent Jesuit), in-

flicted by a large pebble which had been thrown at him. The pain was so sudden and violent, that the black serge breeches of the unfortunate Balthasar came in contact with the wet pavement; and this collision with the damp through the serge momentarily revived him, and caused him to turn his head in the direction from whence the stone must have been hurled. Unluckily, there were but two boys standing there together, and these were the young Count Conconnas and Louis Dominique Cartouche.

Father Balthasar had not a doubt on the subject. As soon as he could move, and it was not without difficulty, for a fat man feels a bruise or the effects of cold more acutely than a spare body, he went and denounced Count Conconnas and Cartouche to the superior, the Abbé Potter.

On the two boys being summoned into the awful presence, the young nobleman, who had mischievously thrown the stone, trembled violently: his companion, who had more courage, saw him turn pale, and when the Jesuit (another

tutor) came up, Cartouche boldly avowed that he himself had hurled the missile. Sorry are we to speak in disrespectful terms of the proper feeling of the juvenile aristocracy of the period, but most certain it was that Count Conconnas did not deny the falsehood Cartouche had uttered, and he afterwards put it on a point of high gentlemanly feeling, that he could not find it in his heart to dispute the word of his school-fellow.

We presume that Cartouche had his motives for his conduct; and the shrewd lad might have also noticed that the system of the masters of Clermont College was (as, indeed, with the whole order of Jesuits), that they could accomplish much more with their pupils by persuasion than by the infliction of coercion. We must, however, make some exceptions to this rule, when the fathers have happened to be connected with the Holy Inquisition.

The superior assumed a stately frown, and demanded of Louis Dominique the reason why

he had dared to assault Father Balthasar. Cartouche, with the innocence that distinguished him, answered that he had accidentally thrown the stone, but Father Balthasar had run across the court at the same instant, and that it touched his back. Now, as the superior was perfectly well aware that the corpulent Balthasar had not attempted to run for the last twenty years, Cartouche was sentenced to a flogging for the palpable deviation from truth. This castigation was administered so smartly, that with all the writhing Cartouche could effect, he could not elude a single switch, and he inwardly cursed his own noble-minded devotion, and the cowardice of Count Conconnas.

When the punishment was over, the Count, with great consideration, brought Cartouche a cold slate to sit on. Cartouche determined to make the Count pay for that which he had endured, for though educated in a Jesuit's college, he did not feel himself authorised to act up to that beautiful Christian principle---that if you

are smitten on one cheek, you are immediately to present the other. Cartouche had received quite enough of it. We regret to say, that instead of contrition, the passion of revenge was uppermost in his mind, and though it was somewhat allayed by the *ex* and *poste*rior application of the cold slate, he, boy-like, inwardly wished that he had pitched the stone into the bladder of the corpulent Balthasar; and he made up his mind to watch his opportunity with his noble young friend.

Nor was it long ere the opportunity befel. The old Count Conconnas had an over-abundance of that which is equally the root of all evil and the source of most of the good things of this life; and his only son's allowance, thanks to the folly of parental fondness, was much more than a schoolboy's share: proving the ancient proverb, "He who has but one pig makes him fat."

Now precisely about this time a remittance had come to hand; a circumstance with which Louis Dominique very soon made himself ac-

quainted through the medium of the young Count's valet. This latter personage, who delighted in the name of Fuseau, was one of the most mercurial of his race, possessing all the sprightliness and gallantry of a Figaro, with somewhere about a tithe of his honesty. It will be evident therefore that his moral thermometer was not very many degrees above zero. It is said that valets are always discreet when they are well paid for their discretion; but even this proposition is not always sure of its corollary, for in the case before us, Fuseau being a lad of genius, had an especial *penchant* for Cartouche, who was also a genius in his way. They had therefore many secrets in common, and it was part of our hero's system to hold out to the dazzled eyes of the valet a rich future reward for the confidence reposed in him. As, however, the remittance amounted to one hundred crowns, Cartouche conceived the idea of an entire repayment of his obligations. He had accurately counted the stripes inflicted, twenty-five; so he took the slate on which he

had already coolly calculated, and put down each switch at four crowns. Rod *versus* Crowns:

Rod.	25
Crowns.	4
	100

---the abstraction of which from the casket in which they were locked, and which was safely deposited in the bed-chamber of the young Count was the next object of Louis Dominique. To be sure the valet might lose his place, or worse, be suspected as the thief; but then Cartouche, being rich, would be able to administer the most effectual consolation. This mode of reasoning, by way of syllogism, will show at what an early period he had acquired original and peculiar notions of right and wrong.

Monsieur Fuseau, having a good and easy situation in the service of the Count Conconnas, was trustworthy in the general sense of the term, and confined his peculations to the pur-

chases he made on account of his master, wherein he contrived that his petty profits should be stated at the mean average of thirty-five per cent.

But to return to Cartouche: night and day he dreamed of the golden adventure in prospect. One hundred crowns! what a treasure for one whose whole soul craved for fine clothes. At a later period, he declared to those around him, that for one whole week he was absorbed in the anticipation of this scheme. But, we are not to suppose that at eleven years of age, the monitor conscience is so obtuse as to disregard the consequences of crime; and, truly, Cartouche had many qualms in traversing the gulf between his former petty thefts, and the career of guilt which must follow his present daring act. Ali Pacha, a robber of later times, and, upon a larger scale, has compared such a course to the ripple of the ocean, which becomes a wave, irresistible in its progress.

Quickness of eye and of apprehension were

qualities for which Louis Dominique was equally remarkable. He watched, cat-like, the movements of the valet.

There was another person upon whom it was necessary to keep a vigilant *surveillance*, and this was the Père Hierome, conservator of the college. This officer had the charge to see that all the pupils were in their beds by a certain hour, and in their absence from school, or on holidays, he held the keys of the different rooms in his custody. The greedily-coveted moment at length arrived. The young Count Conconnas received an invitation to pass the day at the country house of his aunt, the Marchioness de Bouillé, at Versailles, where he was also to sleep. Conconnas was to dispense with the services of his college valet, as there were numerous servants at the chateau. Fuseau was delighted on hearing this, as he had been asked to a wedding in the city, and he took the opportunity of entreating his master's permission to go thither. By the rules of the college of Clermont he was

also compelled to solicit leave from Père Hierome, the conservator. The staid sober-visaged father granted the request with an ill grace, and required that the valet should be back within the walls before the tower clock chimed seven. When Fuseau had got out of his hearing, he muttered to himself, "A cursed old brute! I wish he would pass his leisure hours as innocently as I shall." And the valet was correct in his remark, for the hypocritical Jesuit, at a certain period of the afternoon, always repaired to take chocolate with a Spanish lady, a widow, with large beaming black eyes, but who possessed some peculiar scruples of conscience that required the spiritual comfort of Père Hierome as often as it suited his convenience to bestow it.

The Count had departed to his aunt's, but prior to this, during the morning prayers, Cartouche picked his noble friend's pocket of the key of the door of his apartments. The valet started off into the city with a capital appetite, and, although his stomach was empty, he

had a full determination to enjoy himself. The conservator went to his private conservatory, the Spanish widow, scruples, and chocolate; and now Louis Dominique regarded the occasion as exactly fitted to his purpose.

As Cartouche, free from immediate observation, made his way up the narrow staircase, his heart beat, and his tongue was parched; he arrived at the door of the apartments of the young Count—consisting of an entry and two small-sized chambers, respectively used as sitting-rooms and bed-rooms, customary in France from time immemorial. The French are a sagacious people, they choose to sleep where they think; but as sleep renders mankind thoughtless, Monsieur, by this course, obviates the necessity of profound meditation.

Cartouche now applied the stolen key---Oh! what an "*Open Sesame*," according to the translation of the "Arabian Nights," by the highly ingenious Antoine Galland. He entered the room, into which he had not been admitted since

the receipt of the crowns. The way to the Count's chamber lay through that of the valet. But when Cartouche was fairly in, he sought in vain for the casket which contained the treasure; he was certain that neither Conconnas nor Fuseau had taken it away, for he had watched them both out at the great gates; he looked under the bed---in the drawers---in the closets---nowhere? He bit his lips and his fingers with disappointment, and he was on the eve of giving up the pursuit. In gazing round the room he observed two framed engravings, the subjects not quite in unison, for one represented a figure of the Madonna, from a painting by Correggio, with her meek eyes looking downward, and close by it, in a similar frame, was a tawdry portrait of a celebrated female opera dancer of the day, in a distorted attitude. The Madonna's beautiful face was turned towards the door, and seemed to say, "Go, and sin not"—if Cartouche had fortunately been of the disposition to have noticed such a warning:

but the devil contrived to counteract this little accidental intervention, by attracting the eye of Louis Dominique to the poised leg and foot of the dancing lady, which was pointed on high. The glance of Cartouche followed the line, and suddenly rested, to his infinite delight, on the object of his wishes, the casket, perched on the top of an *armoire*---a lofty old-fashioned carved cabinet, or clothes-press. Louis Dominique was breathless. He instantly devised an escalade and gained the top; he then extended his whole length on his stomach---for there was not space enough between the upper part of the cabinet and the ceiling of the room to enable him to sit upright; he reached his arms round the casket, and pressed it closely to his bosom as something long sought and dearly cherished. There he lay in the dust of half a century which had collected on the top of the *armoire*. He had no immediate means of getting the casket down, but he had provided in his pocket a bent nail to be used as a pick-lock; so, with some

labour, by niggling and twiddling, the casket was opened, and before his eye lay the glittering treasure! Oh, how he gloated on it!---" It is mine!---all mine!---a *mine* of silver!"

But the course of thieving (we are thankful that it is so) never did run smooth: and at the very moment when all seemed bright and fair as a poet's dream---a noise---footsteps---" What fiend of hell is coming?" thought Louis Dominique.

Wanting the experience of an older practitioner, Cartouche, intent on his prey, and secure in the absence of any one who could probably come to these apartments, had left the key in the lock of the exterior door.

When Père Hierome went, as was his custom of an afternoon, to the apartments of the Spanish lady, he found her whole establishment in disorder, in consequence of the escape of her favourite parrot from its cage, and the lady, agonised at the loss, had gone herself in pursuit; for she valued the bird greatly, as it had be-

longed to her dear husband, dead and gone, and, moreover, could sing a variety of hymns and psalms, which made it a charming companion in the absence of Père Hierome.

So the Jesuit, recollecting that he had not received the key from either Count Conconnas or the valet, walked back again to the college of Clermont, ascended the stairs, and suddenly entered the room. Cartouche was in despair. He thrust his face down into the dust, and lay on the top of the *armoire* in terrified ambush, expecting instant and summary detection. In so much danger, to stir was impossible; and even to breathe, in the stillness of that chamber, amounted almost to discovery. The Père Hierome looked round the room, and seemed surprised that it should be vacant, especially as he had found the key in the door. He then proceeded to open the doors of the *armoire* with an air of curiosity, and from a shelf he took down a bundle of private letters which had been written to the young Count Conconnas: seated

himself in an arm-chair, with his face turned from the light towards the cabinet, and began to amuse himself with reading these letters, which he considered a very praiseworthy undertaking, as gaining a knowledge and insight of the affairs, secrets, and character of one of the pupils.

He found some letters from the mother of the Count, enjoining him to attend closely to his classical studies, and to be sure to use his tooth-brush daily; one mis-spelt *billet-doux* from a young female, enclosing a lock of her hair, passionately desiring that Conconnas should come and throw himself at her feet, and to be sure to bring some money with him! But the Jesuit was most incensed on reading a letter in which, to his surprise, he found his own name mentioned. This letter had been penned by a crony of the Count Conconnas, whose education was finished, and who had quitted the college. The passage that related to the worthy Père run thus:

"And now, dear friend, tell me how goes on old Fuzwig? How fares our grave conservator? Does he touch the Spanish now? He who cannot laugh, need but think of an old woman that wears false locks. The most penitential anchorite has now and then a small flight of vanity. Oh! Hierome, Hierome! thou art indeed a hypocrite, and settest but a sorry example to thy simple pupils."

The old saying has it, that listeners never hear any good of themselves; certainly the prying Jesuit never imagined, when he surreptitiously read the Count's correspondence, that he should find out that his own peccadilloes were the subject of mirth for the school-boys. He there closed the investigation of the correspondence, and replaced the letters on the shelf in the *armoire*---Cartouche, at full length, was bathed in a cold perspiration. The Jesuit then left the room, passed through the chamber of the valet, and went out at the door, when Louis Domi-

nique, to his exquisite horror, heard the key turn twice in the lock, and found that he was a prisoner. Now, for it was the first moment that he recollected it, he inwardly and bitterly cursed his folly in leaving the key behind: it was useless to think of escape by the window, it was three stories from the court-yard. The only consolation he had was reaching handfuls of the crowns, and cramming them into his pockets, and at this moment he listened to an altercation on the stairs; it was Fuseau, who had returned from the wedding of his relative in the city, and evidently was flustered with liquor. The conservator met the valet at the entry, and chided him for his carelessness in leaving his master's door open, and the key in it. Fuseau protested vehemently that he never received the key. The Jesuit told him that he was drunk, and that he should report him to the principal in the morning. Fuseau defended his character with much volubility so close to the face of the conservator that Père Hierome told him that he smelt un-

bearably of onions and wine. Hierome walked away very dignified, and the valet entered the chamber, and locked the door, in drunken disconcertation. He hiccuped frequently, for in truth he had eaten and drunk hugely at a *bourgeois* dinner, and onions had been plentifully dispersed in the cookery. Fuseau was fond of the vegetables, and knew how to get rid of the strong odour of them, according to the mode of a quaint old English author:---

> "If leekes you like, but do their smell disleeke
> Eat onyons, and you shall not smell the leeke,
> If you of onyons would the scent expell,
> Eat garlicke, that shall drown the onyon's smell."
>
> *Philosopher's Banquet*, 1633.

Fuseau had not the slightest inclination to sleep. The fumes of the wine rendered his brain a little wild, and, in a laudable sense of duty, he began to put his master's chamber to rights, talking all the while to himself: "I drunk, indeed! a faithful servant like me; one who can be left entrusted with untold gold: aye, aye, there's the casket safe enough, though my

young master did leave the outside door open' Shall I take the box down and see what is in it?.....no, no, no, no; be honest, Fuseau—honesty is the best policy. I'll guard the treasure of Count Con—con—Conconnas, with my life. I'm in that humour that if a thief was to break in, I would cut his throat from ear to ear."

This soliloquy was rather unpleasant to the organs of hearing of Cartouche, and he wished himself as insensible as the casket.

Fuseau now lay down on his own bed, but, the door to the Count's room being open, Cartouche, from his elevation, could see the valet distinctly. Sleepless from indigestion, he was turning over the pleasures of the wedding-feast in his imagination, and thinking aloud. First he enumerated the guests: the pretty grisettes that had made his mouth water—the savoury dishes at table—(Cartouche was as hungry as a hound)—and Fuseau dilated on every article, from the indispensable *potage* to the *bœuf à la*

vinaigrette, the turkey *à la daube*, the loin of veal *en epigramme*, the sweetbreads *à la dauphine*, the pigeons *en poqueton*, the lamb cutlets *en casserole*, and the pheasants *à la braise*. This was a city wedding, and there was no lack of good eating—Cartouche's bowels rumbled aloud. Fuseau presently began to recollect all the songs that had been sung during the afternoon, and amused himself, as he could not sleep, with singing them.

" Vive Henri Quatre,
Vive ce roi vaillant!
Ce diable a quatre
Au triple talent :
De boire et de battre,
Et d'être un vert galant—"

roared Fuseau; then, tuning his voice tenderly, he warbled—

" Donne moi, séduisante amie,
Donne moi le plus doux baiser ;
En accordant à ma tendresse,
Un tendre baiser délicieux,
De mon sort, divine maîtresse,
Tu vas rendre jaloux les Dieux."

Cartouche heartily wished Fuseau and his

songs at the devil. This was in vain, for on went the vocal valet—

" Je sers un vieil original
Qui tous les jours crie et tempête ;
Il prétend que je fais tout mal,
Mais moi, je sais lui tenir tête ;
Je crains peu d'être renvoyé.
Ce cher maître (par parenthèse)
Ne m'ayant jamais rien payé,
Chez lui je suis fort à mon aise."

Once Cartouche, whose position was now becoming exceeding painful, half resolved to scramble down from his hiding place, and trust to the mercy of Fuseau, and he made a movement that caused the old *armoire* to creak.

The valet jumped up, and cried out, " Who is there ?" and instantly drew a short *couteau de chasse*, which hung at the bed-side, from its sheath. He exclaimed---" In the name of the Holy Trinity, be ye rat or thief; if ye dare appear, I will disembowel thee."

Cartouche had every reason to believe that, if he ventured down, Monsieur Fuseau, being a little the worse for wine, would be as good as

his word. The night passed on most wearily for Louis Dominique, who neither slept nor dared to sleep, while his extended skeleton was in perfect agony.

Morn at length dawned, and as the valet talked much in his sleep, Cartouche could not stir; but on the clock striking six, Fuseau awoke by habit, with his head aching, his tongue as dry, and as hot, and as white, as a stick of horse-radish, and he experienced all the sensations that ensue from over-feeding and lax libation. Up he got, however, and began reproaching himself with all the sins he had ever committed; amongst which was a neglect of his duty in not keeping the apartments sufficiently clean; and he made a vow to dust the furniture all over, beginning first with the most troublesome task---to brush up the old *armoire*.

Just as Fuseau had laid his hand on his broom, and had lifted a stool, on which he intended to mount, when the discovery of Cartouche would have been inevitable, a loud rap at the outside

door was heard. Fuseau answered the knock; but his manner was very much altered when he addressed Père Hierome---the exhiliration of the over-night formed a strong contrast with the depression of the morning; and he spoke most respectfully to the conservator, with his hand over his mouth. The worthy Père wished to know if the valet had seen the boy Louis Dominique Cartouche, during the preceding afternoon, as he had been a truant from school. Fuseau having pleaded his perfect ignorance, the Jesuit made some allusions to the state of inebriety in which the valet had appeared. Fuseau was all contrition. The conservator then directed him to run to La Courtille, and find out whether the boy was at home or ill. Fuseau obeyed, Père Hierome remarking, that he would remain until he returned. The Jesuit then descended the stairs into the court, with the valet, his intention being, when Fuseau's back was turned, to peruse the remainder of the Count's precious epistles, and to destroy those

that mentioned his name in implication with the Spanish lady. The Jesuit, previous to descending, locked the door. Poor Cartouche could not remain one moment longer; on the vacation of the room, with his pockets filled with ill-gotten gain, he scrambled down from his elevation. Alas! evils are like rain, and come in showers. At the instant that Louis Dominique rested his feet on the floor, the outer door was unlocked. Cartouche caught a glimpse of Hierome, and after an ineffectual attempt to conceal himself behind the hangings of the bed, he threw himself on his knees before the print of the Madonna. Here, to the infinite astonishment of the Jesuit, was the boy of whom he was in search, in an attitude of prayer, and as dirty as a scavenger.

"How camest thou hither, Cartouche?" inquired Père Hierome.

"I've been locked up here all night," readily replied the boy, and with an air of great truth.

When the Jesuit heard this, he began to wonder whether Louis Dominique had noticed his curious perusal of the Conconnas correspondence.

"But how came you to be locked in here?" asked the Jesuit, mildly.

"The Count locked me up for fun," deliberately lied Cartouche.

"And where did you sleep?" asked Hierome.

"I did not like to take the liberty to get into the Count's bed, so I reposed on the floor."

"Ay, that is the reason your face and hands are so dirty; but I observed you on your knees before Our Lady."

"I was offering up a prayer," replied the young hypocrite, "that I might be preserved from punishment."

"That is quite right, boy," said the Jesuit. "Now, did you sleep soundly, Cartouche?"

"I never opened my eyes all night," answered Louis Dominique.

" Well, well, we must, I suppose, look over it this time," blandly remarked the conservator, " since thou wast locked up in sport; go, get thee home, and wash thyself, and breakfast."

CHAPTER II.

CARTOUCHE STARTS IN THE WORLD ON HIS OWN ACCOUNT—"CHEATING PLAY NEVER THRIVES"—CARTOUCHE FALLS INTO AGREEABLE COMPANY—ROYAL ADVICE.

CARTOUCHE did not lose one moment, but bowed to the Jesuit, and made his way down to the foot of the stairs as fast as he possibly could, congratulating himself on his fortunate escape. The first effort of the boy was to run down two or three retired streets. His hunger and thirst were intense, and he came into juxta-position with one of the itinerants of Paris, who had on his back an odd machine formed like a church tower, near the bottom of which was a tap from which, at the will of the *marchand*, a stream of very thin drink, called *tisanne*, issued.

The mouth of Louis Dominique watered at this relishing beverage, and he tendered a crown out of his pocket to the vendor, who drew him three or four of the tin cups-full. Cartouche waited a minute for his change, but, somehow or other, the *marchand de tisanne* had not sufficient small coin in his till, and Cartouche, observing a Jesuit at the corner of the street, ran away, exclaiming, " I shall see you again, monsieur."

" That's a young thief," remarked the *marchand*, quietly putting the crown into his inner pocket.

He now dodged across an almost unfrequented alley, when a charming scent regaled his olfactory nerves, and caused an irresistible appetite. This effluvia proceeded from a lady—no, from the contents of a portable frying-pan, suspended from the shoulders of an old female, with a charcoal pot of fire beneath the pan, in which were perambulating slices of bacon, undergoing the process of the *cuisine*. Cartouche could not withstand this delicacy; the ancient temptress

had slices of bread hanging at her chest in a bag, and the hungry boy, again proffering a crown piece, scalded his mouth with the savoury fry—it was indeed so to him; but the French do not shine in bacon or pork—their pigs are greyhounds. The only endurable part of the animal, to our notion, is the *pied de cochon à la St. Menehoûd*, and who that saint was, it has never been our good fortune to discover.

Cartouche was eating away, to his heart's content, the fried bacon and bread, when, looking round, he saw Monsieur Fuseau, who was returning from La Courtille. He immediately darted behind the old woman, who in amazement turned suddenly round, and dashed her charcoal apparatus against his cheek, almost blinding him with the dust. Here was a sinner with the embers on his head! could he never take warning from a holy omen? Luckily for Cartouche, the valet did not see him; but his fear overcame his prudence, and away he scampered without his change, the old woman calling

after him, but it must be owned with a very faint voice, to come back for his money. He had no sooner turned the corner of the street than she scuttled away as fast as she could in quite an opposite direction, blessing the saints that she had made so good a morning's work of it. Thus we observe, that ill-gotten riches never make their possessor thrive, for Louis Dominique had paid two crowns for a breakfast that was not worth two sous. Once more he found himself the happiest of mortals—he had escaped imminent danger, he was free, and had ninety-eight crowns in his pocket.

Cartouche had a passion for fine clothes, and he glanced on his school habiliments with infinite contempt; so he made his way to the Rue de la Fripperie, and stopping at a broker's shop, surveyed with a longing eye a coat trimmed with silver lace. The broker invited Louis Dominique into the shop, and a bargain was soon struck up for the coveted dress. A pair of black satin breeches were tried on in a trice, and a

long-flapped padasuoy waistcoat, ornamented with tambour-work, completed Cartouche's costume. A small three-cornered hat edged with feathers, formed a finish to this elegant apparel, for which our hero paid about six times the value, in his anxiety to be attired as a gentleman. The broker suggested to him the necessity and decency of washing his face and hands, and very good-naturedly offered the use of a basin and towel. So far, all was of a piece, with the exception of a very dirty shirt: but as finery and filth were frequently in company together, not only at that period in Paris, but are even in vogue up to the present enlightened day, the discrepancy was not by any means an object worth notice.

Cartouche had still a want; his hair was in the formal cut of the Jesuit's college; and now, feeling himself to be somebody, as fine feathers make fine birds, he entered the shop of a first-rate *perruquier*, where he was received by a well-dressed gentlemanly-looking person, with a

sword by his side. Cartouche very innocently asked for the barber.

" Monsieur should be informed," replied the gentlemanly-looking person, " that the cognomen of barber is no longer in use in the fashionable world. Please to be seated."

Cartouche, sitting down, said—" Bless my soul! are you the hair-dresser?"

" Pardon me, monsieur, no; I am the physiognomist; give me leave to call my assistant; hola! Fabien." And forthwith entered a garçon *perruquier*, with all the necessary apparatus. The physiognomist took Cartouche by the chin, that he might examine his face the better—he gazed at him gravely for a few seconds, and then addressing his assistant, " *visage à marrons*," said he, " *marronnez, monsieur.*" The physiognomist bowing, retired to an inner part of the shop, while the garçon proceeded with his task, and soon gave to the exterior of the head of Cartouche a very knowing and rakish appearance. The young gentleman now determined to make

up for his late abstinence and discomfort, by enjoying himself to the utmost at the fair of St. Germains, whither he repaired; and there can be no doubt that his intentions were fulfilled to the letter, as he caused his crowns to fly about in all directions. He had quite forgotten the past, and all wore the sunny smile of pleasure, when—so quickly does detection tread on the heels of crime—on returning to Paris, and cogitating as to how and where he should pass the night, he was suddenly accosted by one of his schoolfellows with the tidings that the robbery was discovered; that Fuseau, the valet, was in custody; that for playing the truant a complaint had been laid before the principal of Clermont College, and that a public punishment of rare and most rigorous severity was in preparation for Cartouche, under the direction of the Abbé Potter.

This was enough for Dominique; to risk the mercies of the Jesuits when seriously offended were madness. So, without loss of time, after bidding adieu to his schoolfellow, and giving

him a crown to say that he had not seen him, he walked on in trepidation, scarcely knowing whither he went. At length he found himself in the suburbs of Paris, and, continuing to pace on, arrived about twilight at Reine Moulin, so exhausted as to be unable to proceed further. Creeping within the verge of a wood, Cartouche reclined himself at the root of an elm tree.

Notwithstanding the "honour" which is said to exist among thieves, certain it is that there is less of *esprit de corps*, and more of distrust, in that "honourable" fraternity than in any other. This circumstance alone would be sufficient to prove that thieves are excellent logicians, since in reasoning from others *to* themselves they invariably premise a fallacy; whereas, in deducting *from* themselves to others, they adhere to truth with a most praiseworthy scrupulousness. They rob, for instance, under the allegation that *all* property belongs to all men—excepting only that which *belongs to themselves!* We beg the reader to pardon this digression, which he, or

she will, we think, the more readily do, for the moral which it involves.

Now, Cartouche, who had with so little compunction disregarded the *meum* and *tuum* of social life, was not a little alarmed at the prospect of being robbed himself of his ill-gotten gains. And this apprehension it was that, though wearied and foot-sore, prevented him from sleeping for a good quarter of an hour after he had thrown himself on the turf beneath the spreading elm before alluded to. At the end of that period he began to dose, and might eventually have slumbered, but for the distant sounds of voices and of steps. The approach of a number of persons became manifest shortly after, as the moonlight fell on them, and the lengthened shadows moved rapidly over the patches of greensward. At last, they were so near that Louis Dominique could distinguish the phrases they made use of; but these were in a language with which he had not the most remote acquaintance.

Cartouche was naturally courageous, and at a later period in life would not have lost his presence of mind for an instant, merely because some fifteen singularly wild-looking personages had encamped within twenty yards of him; but inexperienced as he was, he trembled from head to foot, and so grotesquely unintelligible were their shouting, singing, dancing, and their witch-like preparations for the evening's repast, that he began seriously to question their identity with mortals like himself.

These beings made a monstrous clatter with their iron pots and pans, and a fire was briskly kindled under a large cauldron; their gestures became at last so extravagant, and their rites so startling, that Cartouche gave himself up for lost, and imagined that each moment might see him in the power of evil spirits, as a punishment for his past crimes. Remorse took possession of him, and he repeated aloud a short prayer with which he was familiar at Clermont College; and which, as it happened to be for the repose of the

soul of Ignatius Loyola, was not quite to the purpose, but it was the first that occurred to Louis Dominique, and he poured it forth. The noise he made fell on the ear of one of the scouts of the party, who instantly began to reconnoitre, but perceiving that, in lieu of an enemy in ambush, there lay a shivering and helpless-looking lad, he burst out into a laugh of derision, and began to dance before him very much after the fashion of a cacodemon during the last gasp of an usurer. This circumstance convinced poor Dominique that his fears were but too well grounded, and he commenced uttering such doleful lamentations, that the scout deemed it advisable to resort to means for tranquilising the youth, lest his cries might bring around them unwelcome visitants. He therefore made a signal, which was promptly attended to, and some half-dozen ragged rogues, seating themselves on the grass near our hero, began to talk French to him, and to assure him they were in reality no more than flesh and blood like himself, though mayhap a

shade or two darker in complexion. He could doubt no longer, and, when they politely invited him to sup with them, he willingly, and at the suggestion of a craving appetite, added to a shivering sensation caused by dozing in the chill night air, agreed to join their circle. Some females, with intensely sparkling black eyes, were busily employed around the cauldron, from which reeked a very savoury odour, which made Cartouche's mouth water. And yet all these had appeared to him, only a short time before, no better than so many devilish inventions. So true it is that our eyes

> " ——— are the fools of the senses,
> Or else, worth all the rest."

The reader will have concluded long ere this, as to the precise character of the society into which Cartouche had been introduced; for he will have been aware that the *romance of thievery* cannot be better exemplified than among a community of gipsies.

According to Pasquier, in his " Rêcherches

Historiques," the people known as gipsies first appeared in Paris, in August, 1427, and they then came as penitents or pilgrims. They represented themselves to be Christians driven out of Egypt by the Mussulmans; they obtained permission to remain in the kingdom, probably because they were expert in certain small trades; other troops of these erratics followed, and they wandered about in all directions, committing petty depredations, and their women invariably assuming the calling of fortune-tellers.

They were named by the French *Bohemiens*, as they were supposed by some to have passed over from Bohemia; but an antiquarian author asserts, that they derived the name from "*Boëm*," an old French word signifying a sorcerer. The race was then, as it is now, dispersed all over the habitable globe. Everywhere they exhibit the same roving character, a dislike to a fixed settlement and to the arts of husbandry, including a general uncleanness in their diet; imbued with profound ignorance, a disposition to pilfer, and

to impose on the credulity of others; and it is remarkable that, though they came evidently from a warmer climate, while other beggars lodge in barns, stables, or cow-houses, these sturdy vagrants pride themselves in braving the severities of winter, under the equivocal shelter of a tattered blanket, extended on a few hazel rods stuck into the earth at convenient distances.

When the meal was sufficiently cooked, the contents of the cauldron were ladled and forked out into a large metal dish; and if variety constitute the zest of a feast, this banquet did not want that charm. The foundation of the *potage* was four or five old hens, and a once jolly cock; a *gigot* of questionable-looking mutton, pigeons (there are pigeons at every feast in France), and nine sucking pigs, which were so exceedingly diminutive in size, as to lead one to imagine that they had been, by some accident, still-born. Little did Cartouche imagine that he was seated in a royal presence, but so it happened. The old chief of this party, although he

squatted on the turf, rejoiced in the title of King of the Gipsies; and there was a prodigious fuss amongst the presiding goddesses of the cauldron, in hunting and groping to the bottom, to pick out a peculiar delicacy that had been stewing for his Majesty. This was a small quadruped, whose flesh is in much esteem with the gipsies, as being sweet and well flavoured—the *Erinaceus Europæus*, familiarly called the common hedge-hog—an animal of great utility, not exactly as to food and clothing, but food and *clothes-brush*—that is, if ever gipsy brushed his raiment; and we have also heard on authority, that the prickly skin was, in remoter times, used by the Romans for hackling hemp.

The royal banquet could have been more numerously attended; it might as easily have consisted of three thousand as of the number of which it was composed: but then there were reasons (for, alas! there was a police) which will immediately suggest themselves in favour of this mode of keeping a court, and travelling with the

least possible ostentation, for a law, which had passed in 1560, was still unrepealed, and this *ordonnance* enjoined all impostors and vagabonds, styled "Bohemiens" or "Egyptians," to quit the kingdom under pain of the galleys.

In the course of the conversation, Cartouche was given to understand that the name of the clan was Curleople, and that, by tradition, they were the descendants of some of Pharaoh's host, that had miraculously escaped drowning in the Red Sea. Cartouche felt a glow at the heart, in being in presence of the scions of so ancient a family. Moreover, he had seldom been in such attractive company, for on his left hand sat a rather remarkable specimen of gipsy beauty. She was about seventeen years of age, had raven hair, black sparkling Andalusian eyes, a complexion dark, but healthy, a form somewhat slight, and, altogether, that captivating flexibility of mien, which the Spaniards explain by the word *desinvoltura*. Louis Dominique, albeit too young to be violently in love, and to whom every

woman did not appear as an angel, was, nevertheless, much charmed with the attentions paid him by the pretty Rose Coquillarde;* and her sparkling eyes and white teeth, by a sort of mesmeric influence, aroused in him all the latent qualities of a mind, which was singularly buoyant, though devoid of the highest attributes of imagination. The King perceived this, and determined to draw out our hero, with a remote view to *drawing out* his money, if, perchance, he possessed any.

The King—but, in the name of loyalty, what historians are we, that have left this worthy with the bare mention of titular distinction?

Roy Colas (the original of our own "Old King Cole") sat with much majesty, as dispenser of the good things on this occasion; and yet it was a majesty overteeming with the recklessness of fun. He was tall, and gaunt of figure, with a face composed, as it were, of four rubicund dumplings; his nose—a fifth smaller dumpling,

* Coquillarde—*argot*, "Female Pilgrim."

a glowing specimen of the claret class—threw a sort of setting sunlight over everything; he sang with admirable voice and humour, and the twinkle of his eye betrayed an instant apprehension of the ludicrous. His Majesty's attire was as characteristic as it was curious, and consisted of a buff jerkin, but patched in as many pieces as a dissected toy-map; his short cloak was of rusty green, and embroidered with the shining slime of snail tracks; his hose were odd, one scarlet, and the other striped. Over these were drawn a pair of jack-boots, exactly twice as large as was required by the shanks of their wearer, but they had their utility, for there was a space near each calf to pop in a stolen fowl, or a snared rabbit. We say nothing of the tags, points, ribbons, orders of merit (?); but beneath his jerkin, on the bare blade of his shoulder, he wore an order (of demerit) which had been permanently affixed by the gratitude of an enlightened government; and, so great was the modesty of Roy Colas, that however warm he might have felt on the

occasion of his receiving it, he was never known at any period to have been vain enough to exhibit it publicly. And this we attribute entirely to the good sense of his Majesty.

The shaggy locks of Roy Colas were surmounted by an antique *chapeau bras*, the flat part worn in front when the sun shone; but, if the weather was rainy, it was invariably turned the other way, to keep the wet from trickling down his Majesty's neck, and inconveniencing his badge. This elegant hat was ornamented with two cock's feathers. In a leather belt hung his "*flambe*," or short tuck sword, which would serve for any occasion; so excellent was its temper, that it could rip up an enemy, embowel a porker, pick a lock, open an oyster, strike a light against a flint, cut his hair, scale a salmon-trout, dislodge a trunk from a travelling-carriage; in fact, it was a sword of all work—a *hack*-sword.

The hedge-hog having been discussed, Roy Colas, wiping his regal lips on the back of his hand, called "Ho! Bras D'Acier, the wine-

skin!" And now Cartouche saw that something very much resembling a young porpoise was thrown into the midst of the company; and, at the same moment, cups of wood and pewter were placed before them. Then appeared Bras D'Acier (who was the gentleman who had amused him by his dancing), a fellow of a savage physiognomy, who speedily tapped the wine-skin, and, filling the King's cup and his own, commanded Cartouche to do the like by the rest of the circle; but the latter, whose spirit, under any circumstances, was indomitable, was not to be passively trodden on, and he therefore took about as little notice of the frowns and immense moustaches of Monsieur Bras D'Acier as though he had been a paper Scaramouch.

Bras D'Acier raised a leathern thong which served him for a girdle, and menaced Cartouche with a heavy thwack; but this was instantly averted by the quick eye and address of Rose Coquillarde, who suddenly plucked the belt from the hand of the assailant, and threw it into

the cauldron. Louis Dominique gave the pretty gipsy a grateful glance, which was not unobserved by Roy Colas. Rose Coquillarde then filled the vessels all round, and drank "To the well-doing of the stranger!"

"Let us know the stranger's name," said his Majesty.

"Cartouche," replied Louis Dominique.

"Cartouche," repeated Rose.

"The son of the Emperor of Italy, doubtless!" remarked Roy Colas, with a wink; "aye, aye, and in disguise, for reasons of state. By Saint Dindon! when *I* was about the age of the Prince of Italy, I was not unwilling to bear a wine-stoup round to the guests of the king, my father; and for an excellent reason—I always had as much liquor as I could drink for my pains. But come, come; let the wine go round. Sit ye down, Bras; thou hast but one eye, my friend, but it is better to have but one eye than to be quite blind. Do not you see with half an eye that our guest is a gentleman?"

Cartouche was much tickled with the latter part of this speech; for, whatever might have been faulty in the jesuitical system, politeness was, at all events, taught amongst them as a virtue; and of this quality Louis Dominique was never known to be deficient, he therefore felt complimented by his Majesty.

Roy Colas now addressed Cartouche, and said, "Young Monsieur," his tongue squeezed into his cheek, and an irresistible twinkle of his orbs of vision, "depend upon it, that whensoever you see a man that has but one eye, you may certainly conclude he has lost the other."

Cartouche was about to acknowledge the truth of this axiom, when his Majesty said, "My children and subjects, listen to my admonitions, and I will tell ye a line of conduct to pursue, that men and women may readily grant all you ask of them."

"Aye, aye!—expound!" replied several voices.

"Hear!" exclaimed Roy Colas. "Desire the women to take all you have, and the men to give

you nothing, and they will all grant it. And now I will instruct you how to be beloved by all mankind."

"How, how?" asked the auditors of his Majesty.

"Listen!" said the old chief. "Lend, and never be paid—present, treat, bear, endure, do good turns, hold your peace, and be cheated. But, moreover, as we should all be prepared for our end, I will teach you how to order it so, that ye may not die without somebody to pray by you."

As this point was interesting to many of the company, curiosity was excited for the solution; and his Majesty, with a beneficent smile, said, "Go and commit some heinous crime, and depend on't, at the gallows, you'll not want somebody to pray by you."

The motley tribe again grinned at the oft-repeated jests of their chieftain. Roy Colas did not, on this occasion at least (according to his translation into "Old King Cole"), call for

his "fiddlers three," but in lieu of that, he called for his "posture masters four," who, in the quality of serving men, had been hitherto reverentially stationed behind the sovereign's sitting-place; and if his Majesty had not been considered as an absolute monarch, they might have been supposed to have acted as a sort of rump parliament. These gentlemen ate their porridge in the back-ground, sometimes standing, sometimes cross-legged, *à la Turque.* At a signal from the King of the Gipsies, they performed a dance in illustration of many of their professional practices, such as "*Epouser la Foucandiere,*"* "*Battre l'Antiff,*"† "*Debacler la roulante,*"‡ "*Faucher le pré.*||" But there was no piece of their pantomime that seemed to give such general satisfaction as the one denominated

* In Argot—"Throwing away stolen goods for fear of being taken."

† "To run off."

‡ "Open a carriage in order to rob the travellers."

|| "Go to the galleys."

"*Etouffer le curé;*"* it afforded infinite amusement to Cartouche; and we regret to narrate that the King himself so far lost all sense of dignity and propriety, as to join in the last-mentioned exploit, where he personated the character of "*le curé,*" grunting to admiration, while the other performers in this singular drama were endeavouring to stifle him. Louis Dominique, being wholly untrained in these exercises so well adapted to promote digestion, was compelled to remain a spectator. For a time he was consoled with the presence of the pretty Rose Coquillarde, who ever and anon pinched his ear, whilst smiling in his face, and exhibiting her pearly teeth. Cartouche discovered that night a new feeling within him, which was not at all decreased by beholding the picturesque form of the young damsel preparing to dance, and next whirling about with the velocity and somewhat of the air of a Pythoness. He had never before witnessed such animated gesture and dex-

* "Smother the hog."

terity. Rose Coquillarde held in one hand a small tambourine, ornamented with little knots of gaily coloured worsted, and ever and anon, as she footed near Cartouche, she touched him smartly on the head with the instrument, which produced on him a very striking effect.

And now, one of the oldest women of the tribe placed herself close to Louis Dominique, and the change was not at all palatable to the young stranger; but then she was most motherly and kind in her attentions, and made him an offer of a patched cloak, as well as a certain garment of flannel, or *woolsey* (probably so called from the celebrated English cardinal, because he was known to be *warm* in his pocket as well as his temper). These habiliments were intended to protect Cartouche from the dews of night, and were presented with a grace that would not admit of refusal.

The old lady told him she had chosen a retired and quiet nook, where he would be free from molestation, for the asses had all lain down for the

night behind the back drapery of the tent, and would greatly contribute to his warmth; Cartouche inwardly hoped that he might be the first awake, as his outside companions in all probability, on rising in the morning, would bring their hoofs in juxta-position with his head. And donkeys generally have a good roll and kick when they get up for the day.

The aged hag had prepared for him, after a good old fashion, a night draught, which, with his fatigues, she represented as indispensable. And certain it is, that ere the vagrant revels ended, Cartouche had resigned himself, and cares, and *pockets*, to the old lady who presided over his slumbers. She was commonly known by the respectable cognomen of Madame Six-Fingers.*

Long after dawn Louis Dominique awoke, with a very unpleasant sensation of stiffness in his joints, and an equally unwelcome absence of

* Possibly because she was accomplished in the art described in "Argot," as "*Greffir*," that is "*Derober finement.*"

the same quality in his pockets. He had, in truth, been completely "cleaned out," and no doubt by his amiable old friend. But remonstrance would have been wasted on the winds, and, as to redress, it was a vision.

Fortunately, in the act of disburthening their guest, the gipsies had dropped a single crown piece, on the grass—but no, we will not do any injustice even to gipsy nature. It had been deposited there by Rose Coquillarde, and under it was one of the little coloured worsted knots, that had been observed on her tambourine the preceding evening. Cartouche saw at once in this, the *one* friend he had secured; but he was too young to acknowledge the unbounded benevolence, which, in spite of all the corrosions of sin, makes its temple in the heart of woman.

CHAPTER III.

CARTOUCHE MEETS WITH A STRANGE GENTLEMAN, WHO INVITES HIM TO BREAKFAST—CARTOUCHE IS INVITED TO A CHATEAU—HE IS INTRODUCED INTO SOCIETY—THE STRANGE GENTLEMAN'S OPINION OF THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH'S CAMPAIGN—THE STRANGE GENTLEMAN SKILFULLY RETREATS—CARTOUCHE DESTITUTE—A CHANCE OF REFORMATION, OF WHICH HE DOES NOT AVAIL HIMSELF.

Having picked up the crown piece, which he gazed at wistfully, Cartouche endeavoured to collect his scattered senses; he looked around him—the low tent blanket under which he had slept had vanished, his joyous companions of the previous night were not to be seen; he was solitary. An anonymous poet has so delightfully described such a departure, that we cannot refrain from transcribing his lines:—

"You may see where we have been,
By the burnt spot on the green;
By the oak's branch drooping low,
Withered in our faggots' glow;
By the grass and hedge-row cropped,
Where our asses have been grazing,
By some old torn rag we dropped,
When our crazy tents were raising.
You may see where we have been
Where we are—that is not seen;
Where we are—it is no place
For a lazy foot to trace."

Cartouche in his innocence, or want of knowledge of the world, at first vowed that he would pursue the strollers, and insist on the return of his money; then he recollected the fierce glare of the one eye of Bras D'Acier, and the keen edge of the tuck sword of Roy Colas; and then he pondered on the notion that he had stolen the crowns himself, and that it was not quite an unjust retribution. He had hardly recovered from the effects of the night draught with which he had been *hocussed*, and his limbs felt the effect of another night draught—the chill air in which he had slept. To return to Paris would

be madness, so he resolved to walk on, and as he walked to try to make up his mind as to what conduct he should pursue. So he pushed on briskly about a league; the exercise removed in some measure his rheumatic pains, and his spirits, which were naturally buoyant, rose as he proceeded.

Cartouche presently discovered a person walking before him: he was tall, of a spare figure, and he stepped along with rather a jaunty air. Louis Dominique thought that he was an underling sort of gentleman, for he wore a sword by his side.

He had on a clean starched band, and his hat, though it had evidently seen some service, was cocked up into a very knowing shape. His eye was roving, bright, and intelligent, and as Cartouche came up he saluted him with some grace, which Cartouche returned with one of his best Clermont College bows.

"It is more cheerful to travel in company than alone," remarked the stranger. Louis Dominique was of the same opinion, and right glad was he

to have encountered so respectable a person, who might, perchance, put him in some way to obtain a livelihood—nay, mayhap, might take him into his own service.

"Where art thou journeying, little Monsieur?" asked the strange gentleman.

"In truth I hardly know," replied Cartouche; "I go to seek my fortune, I have unluckily quarrelled with my parents and acquaintance, and I am in search of new friends."

"Thou hast a wide field before thee for selection—a brave world to thrive in. I am somewhat similarly circumstanced. I am a real substantial gentleman, but what of that?—my pedigree would not produce me credit for a mess of broth at the cook's shop. I have sold all, even to my family tomb, that nothing may be called mine when I am dead. My father lost his whole substance, which ought to have been my inheritance, by being security for others. I have nothing left me but my *quality as a gentle-*

man, and which is now useless, as every scoundrel usurps it."

Cartouche nodded an assent to the latter part of this speech.

"I am constitutionally of an indolent disposition," resumed the elegant stranger; "I will venture to avow that I lose three thousand crowns annually by my shocking idleness. I have no estate, real or personal, and yet I contrive to live in a gentlemanly way."

This sentence struck Cartouche, as it was very much in unison with his own ideas.

"And now," said this fascinating stranger, "as we have both walked some distance, and it is almost time for breakfast, I know an excellent house of entertainment, where we may be well supplied, for I am not one of those miserly persons who love to stint themselves."

Cartouche admitted that he felt hungry.

"I disdain to be thought one of those hypocrites," continued the gentleman, "who flock about the gate of a monastery, and make the

friars believe that they take the bread and soup out of devotion. I confess to have partaken of convent alms, but then it has ever been from the hands of a pretty lay sister," and here the stranger smoothed his band, and cocked his hat on one side with irresistible grace. "Monsieur," said the gentleman, "much may be done in this world by being on good terms with the women."

Another half-hour's trudge brought them to the door of a small *cabaret;* on the rude shutter of the casement were painted, in colours that the rays of the sun had neutralized, two bottles, over which was inscribed "*Bon vin*," "*Bon cidre*," "*Billiards*,"—the latter was surmounted by a representation of a mace, cue, and balls.

Here the gentlemanly stranger halted, and remarked that, although the house of entertainment was of small dimensions, it was clean, and in great repute on the road. He then turned suddenly round to Louis Dominique, and said, "Pr'ythee, Monsieur, can you give me change for a gold piece."

Cartouche was in his verdant state—very green, indeed; and he replied, "No, Monsieur, I have but a crown piece in my pocket."

"'Gad-so, that is unlucky," resumed the gentleman, lifting up his boot, and swishing the dust off; "nevertheless, let us go in, and partake of a hearty breakfast."

On entering the *auberge*, after the pedestrians had been thoroughly scanned—and, indeed, so much so, that Cartouche, with indignant feelings, took out his crown piece, and exhibited it in the sunshine which glared in at the window—bread, eggs, wine, grapes, and pears, were put on the table.

The gentleman stranger, calling to the woman of the house, said, "Madame, I cannot help thinking that you have grown much handsomer since I last had the pleasure to see you—your eyes are brighter, and your teeth are whiter."

The little hostess's smile proved how agreeable this piece of flattery was to her vanity, but

when her back was turned, he winked slyly at Cartouche, and whispered,—"What a master key is flattery! I have won that woman's heart during our sojourn here. This bread is excellent, the eggs are delicious. I have drunk a stronger wine than this, but never a purer beverage. Monsieur, I pledge you—here is to our better acquaintance. Allow me to cut you a slice from this loaf. My friend the Duke of Clarivaux (now dead and gone, God rest his soul!) used to take a vast delight in seeing me carve a pullet." And he helped himself plentifully, cramming as if for a wager.

"Now, Monsieur," continued he, "take my advice—the advice of a man of the world. You are still young; never fall in love unless it be to earn your bread."

"But how am I to earn my bread?" said Cartouche.

"Why, if you must court a woman, never choose one who is rich or beautiful; you must fish in deeper water. You may make love to

your landlady for your lodging, to the female tripe merchant for your meat, and to the clear-starcher for your band; there is no existing without a starched band."

At this moment, the cavalier put his hand within the bosom of his doublet to take out some crumbs he had dropped therein, and Louis Dominique observed to his astonishment that, although he considered a starched band as indispensable, he was shirtless. Cartouche inquired if the cavalier preferred that fashion? To which the other readily answered—

"Certainly, during the summer season I neither wear shirt nor stockings; no one that sees the boots on my legs would believe they were on the bare skin. Sir, a gentleman can live without these things, and so set an excellent example of practical economy to the community at large. Moderation in everything—he who has a long nose will have the more to blow and a better handle."

Such was the style of this gentleman's conver-

sation while devouring a plentiful breakfast. He then declared himself invigorated for the day, and said he should go and pay the hostess. During his absence Cartouche congratulated himself upon the good fortune of having fallen in with so agreeable a companion, and one withal sufficiently liberal to treat him to a breakfast.

Presently the cavalier without a shirt re-entered the room, saying, "Egad! in a house of this repute and quality is it not remarkable that they have not change for a gold piece? It really is too ridiculous a sum to score up. Will you, Monsieur, pay the reckoning out of any small change you may have about you, and I will make it up to you where we shall dine, sup, and sleep?" He uttered this with such an easy air of nonchalance, that Louis Dominique was taken by surprise, and felt himself obliged to consent.

"Hallo, *aubergiste*," bellowed the cavalier. The landlady entered. "What did you say was

the amount for the two?—you need not separate it." Then the gentleman turned to Cartouche, and said—"Pay this good lady; did you ever behold a more agreeable form, and such a winning smile, too? I declare it does my eyesight good to gaze on her."

The hostess grinned as she handled Cartouche's crown piece, and returned him the change.

They took their departure; the cavalier gallantly kissing the tips of the landlady's fingers as he bade her good day. "'Fore 'gad," said he, "a delicate creature truly, although her hand smelt somewhat overstrong of garlic." He then proposed that they should journey on to a house where he was well known, and could repay the courtesy of Cartouche.

The weather was fine, the birds whistled merrily, and the companion of Louis Dominique was chatty and amusing. He told him he could put him in possession of many secrets which would enable him to live well, let his income or inheritance be next to nothing: and

that he was in sanguine hopes that his advice would produce beneficial effects on a person of the capacity of Cartouche.

After walking for several hours, which healthful exercise thoroughly digested the *cabaret* breakfast, they approached a solitary and melancholy-looking house. The casements had long discontinued the use of glass; bits of board, rags, and old hats, stopped up many of the crevices; the door was fastened, although it rested but on one hinge; and at a small upper window there hung out a dead crow, plucked of its feathers, the flesh almost of a purple hue, and which, with its dull yellow beak and scraggy neck, was a most disgusting looking object. It was undergoing an operation preparatory to cooking—hanging out in the air in the vain hope that it might become tender. It resembled a young *raw devil.*

The shirtless cavalier appeared to be familiar with the *locale*, and struck the door with his staff. After a query, as it appeared to Cartouche,

in some foreign language that he did not comprehend, and a sort of pass-word given by his companion, the portal was unbarred, and Cartouche was invited to enter. Cartouche followed his new friend in, and remarked that the premises, though in a dilapidated state, were much more roomy than the exterior indicated. They entered an apartment in which were seated several strange beings, variously clothed: the materials of their clothing were evidently composed of that which is imagined to be the best manure for hop plantations—viz., old rags! In fact, our hero was introduced to a beggar's lodging house. As a friend of the cavalier, Cartouche received a hearty welcome; he was embraced with more ardour than quite pleased him, for he had good reason to decline too close a contact with the illustrious strangers who surrounded him. Cartouche observed an elderly man who had hooked an arm of a coat against the wall, and was with a needle and twine drawing together the rents in the sleeve.

An old woman with a face puckered with wrinkles had pinned a threadbare rag, which had once been dignified by the name of a shirt, to a line stretched across the corner of the room, and was squirting at it with a leaden syringe, filled with water from a cracked bowl, the only mode of ablution the linen, or rather the tinder, would bear, without going to pieces. It appeared to be a specimen of misapplied industry.

A sturdy mendicant was with a flint beating down the obtrusive points of the clouted nails which had made their way through his coffin of a shoe, and at every blow a cloud of road-side dust flew up, which answered the purpose of snuff to many of the inmates of the lodging-house, for they sneezed in all directions.

"And may I inquire what branch of the profession those ladies with the tattered head-cloths pursue?" said Cartouche.

"Those ladies," replied his familiar communicant, "are what are termed '*palliardes*.' They

sit on the steps of the doors, or outside the churches, with their own, or half-a-dozen borrowed or stolen, children hanging about them, crying through cold or pinching. These brats are made to take a dose of vinegar before they go out for the day, which afflicts them with an undoubted real stomach-ache, and makes them look pale. Thus they earn a deal of money and food from the credulous and charitable."

And now a long sallow-faced, hypocritical-looking fellow came in, attired in a rusty suit of black, with a broad hat and dingy hat-band. He pulled out a bag tolerably well filled with copper pieces, which the cavalier informed Cartouche had been begged from door to door, on the strength of a forged letter purporting to be signed by a bishop, and that the bearer was a collector for the missionaries sent out to China to propagate Christianity, but as that measure was not very popular with the head of the government of that country, these pious men appeared under the title of "His Majesty's

Mathematicians." It was evidently a fraud, but then it was in a good cause.

And now it appeared that the repast had been delayed until the arrival of this most respectable functionary; for this sage community, imitating the law of the Lacedæmonians, feasted at a common table—and a very common table it certainly was. But in the place of the celebrated black-broth, was substituted a soup of cabbages and onions, accompanied with rye-bread; and the collector for the missionaries having taken a pinch of snuff and said grace, the mumpers, *palliardes,* and sham-abrams fell to with ample appetites, until not a vestige remained. Not a crumb fell to the ground, so that the rats and mice of these premises, had they remained, must have been starved to death.

"I have kept my word, and presented you a supper," said the cavalier to Cartouche. The latter grunted, as much as to infer that it was a meal fit for a pig.

"No matter," continued the cavalier; "we

soldiers are accustomed to hard fare; it is, moreover, wholesome."

The growling in the stomach of Louis Dominique responded not to that fact. "I must reenter the army," remarked the cavalier, "and again join in the illustrious victories of our *grande monarque*."

"Then the sooner you do so the better," said the collector for the Chinese missionaries, "for at no period has the King ever had more occasion for your services."

"Why, what has occurred?" asked the man of arms.

"It can now no longer be kept secret," replied the collector. "The Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene have annihilated our army at Blenheim; ten thousand French and Bavarians are killed, thirty squadrons of horse drowned in the Danube; one hundred pieces of cannon taken—numberless prisoners, standards, kettle-drums, tents, coaches, all the wives of the French officers, and all the mules and the military chests."

"Curse it!—why was I not there?"

"Why?" he was asked.

"I do not imagine that affairs would have been so disastrous," answered this paragon of modesty. "What has become of Mareschal Tallard?"

"A prisoner," sighed the collector.

"I should not have done that," remarked the shirtless cavalier; "and where is the Marquis of Clerambaut?"

"Drowned!"

"I should not have done that. Where Des Nouvilles and the other officers of distinction?"

"Capitulated, at eight in the evening, prisoners of war, on condition that they should not be rifled."

"I should not have done that," reiterated the cavalier.

"No; I believe you there," said the missionary; "for, *par Dieu*, you would have rifled them all!"

The incident we now communicate will go

some way to prove the folly of adhering to the habits of early education. Cartouche had hitherto (the previous night excepted) accustomed himself to take off his suit of clothes before he retired to rest, and, in accordance with this domestic usage, he stripped to his shirt, prior to reclining on a miserable pallet, on which were arranged some very questionable-looking coverlids. Hospitality appeared to be the ruling passion of the cavalier; he had provided the best bed the house afforded for his chance companion — Cartouche was "a stranger," and, without any scriptural allusion, "*they took him in.*"

Cartouche inquired of his friend the cavalier, whereabouts his own bed stood.

"An old soldier, like myself," replied the other, "needs no mattress—a bare floor is all I require; it keeps my figure straight; in fact, if I must sleep in a bed, I should prefer a bed of oysters, or a bed of onions, for then I could recline and sup at the same time."

Cartouche acknowledged that there was some reason in the remark.

The cavalier then, in the kindest manner, bade Cartouche good night, and, stretching himself on the floor, was speedily in the arms of Morpheus.

The long walk and fatigue that Louis Dominique had undergone soon sent him soundly to sleep, spite of the blood-suckers by which he was surrounded.

On awaking rather late in the morning, he was somewhat surprised that his companion had vanished; and, on stepping off his pallet, he made a discovery that smote him to his very heart—his clothes were gone; all, even to the hat and feather—and, in lieu of them, the habiliments of the shirtless cavalier were spread in elegant confusion on the floor.

His first determination was to alarm the house, and to insist on the restoration of his raiment; but after traversing several rooms and passages of the old ruined dwelling, he found

all was desolate, and that the mumpers had already sallied forth to their various destinations.

Cartouche was deeply mortified at his loss, but he had no remedy but patience, and it was at no small exertion of that virtue that, sooner than remain in a state of nudity, he attempted to put on the clothes left behind by the cavalier; he tried eight different times to attire himself in the nether garment, which was in eight pieces, nor could he discover the right side from the wrong. In fact, he had not made the art of dress so complete a study as the former occupant of these picturesque habiliments. He, however, succeeded in pinning the breeches together in some shape, and then exerted himself to get on the doublet, but his arm went through a hole, and the sleeve hung down like a broken limb. At length his sad toilette was finished, and, heartily cursing the premises, and the person who had conducted him thither, he passed out through the crazy old door without meeting a soul. He had taken the precaution to secure

the change out of the crown piece by tying it tight in the corner of his shirt, or that would have most assuredly vanished with his wardrobe.

Many bitter reflections came over him; repentance and rags coalesced; he dared not wend his steps homeward. Had he summoned the resolution to have returned a penitent, in all probability he would have been spared the commission of his after crimes and ignominious end, and we should not have had to cover so many sheets of paper with the records of his sins and pranks. But, no; his destiny was sealed, and he determined to make his way along the road, perhaps to reach some sea-port, and endeavour to get employment on ship-board. So on he trudged for several days, sometimes exciting charity, but more frequently suspicion. His small stock of money, however, kept his worst enemy—hunger, away.

It was sunset as Cartouche arrived at that point of the Mont St. Catherine which embraces the entire vale wherein reposes the an-

cient city of Rouen; looking down, the Seine meandered in golden light through the rich pastures and poplar-wooded islands, while here and there the thin blue smoke rose up to Heaven as if from fires fed by the incense of its worshippers.

One only feeling of felicity seemed to prevail over that wide and picturesque demesne, and it was for the moment participated in by Cartouche; for in youth degradation cannot utterly extinguish those better feelings which the craft and worldly wisdom of maturer years are ashamed to acknowledge. But as the sun sank red over the territories of Robert le Diable, Cartouche, darkening into older habitudes, recovered his pristine tendencies to evil, and determined that the shelves of the nearest baker should minister to his necessities. Cautiously, therefore, descending the hill, as the dusk increased, he found himself in the suburbs of St. Etienne, and perceiving a worthy *boulanger* toying in the back apartment with a "second in-

tended," he deemed it ill-bred to disturb them, and therefore dexterously whipped a loaf from the window. Secretly wishing them joy of their *tête-à-tête*, he withdrew, and making a sudden turn down an alley that led out to the fields, he ran until he reached a clump of poplars, where, throwing himself at their roots, he eagerly devoured his bread, deeming it the sweeter because it had been stolen.

At nightfall he entered Rouen, and slept with some other houseless wretches on the steps leading to the cathedral. For a fortnight he contrived by begging and some ingenious petty thefts to exist. His money was spent; but the city where Joan of Arc perished becoming too hot to hold him (as it did, pitiable heroine! for *her*), he was in extreme doubt as to his future movements.

Now fortune threw in his way a chance of reclamation at his last pitch of destitution. He was sitting beside a stone post on the quay, ruminating, chewing the cud of reflection, and,

in an agony of appetite, searching for some stray crust, cabbage-stalk, or end of carrot, from among a heap which had just been emptied from a basket, when he observed a person regarding him with a glance of pity that a human being should be reduced to such extreme distress. Oh, mercy! he beheld his uncle, *cher bon-homme*, who now recognised his deplorable kith and kin. Unlike but too many in similar circumstances, he neither avoided nor reproached him, but gently compassionating his nephew's misery, desired him to follow him to his *auberge*. There he informed Cartouche that he had arrived from Paris some six days prior, and having completed the business he was upon, should in as many more return thither. In the meantime, our hero was indulged with the opportunity of a good scrubbing, and furnished with plain clothes and wholesome food; and his kind uncle undertook to write to his father, and attempt a reconciliation.

By return of post the uncle received an answer

from Cartouche *père*, and alack! it was written, naturally enough, in a spirit of extreme exasperation, and concluded with a threat that the only reception he should give to a son who had so dishonoured him would be to dash out his brains with a cooper's adze, if he ventured to step over his threshold. But, although all hope of immediate pacification was at an end, the uncle trusted in time to beget in his brother's mind a more placable view of the case; he, therefore, counselled the young delinquent to accompany him to Paris when he returned thither. Louis Dominique was all gratitude to his excellent relative, and promised to obey him in every particular.

In a few days the uncle and nephew started by the *diligence* for Paris, and as they traversed the beautiful country, they could not help noticing the slovenly manner in which the agriculture was performed—the women working like beasts of burthen: the operation of tilling the land being effected by a clumsy plough, unim-

proved since the days of Charlemagne, and drawn by a jackass and two female peasants in the same yoke, who were gallantly encouraged in their heavy labour by the ploughman bawling out, "*Tirez, vous bêtes ; tirez, Angelique; tirez, Mademoiselle Taupine ! Hola ! âne !*" With such an occupation, with more than their share of labour, with scanty food, a fruit breakfast, bread and onions for dinner, and chesnuts for supper, was it to be thought surprising that the poor female French peasants should soon lose every appearance of youth in the face ?—that they should look old and wrinkled ?—that their legs should grow like posts, and they should become absolutely hideous ? All this degradation of human nature was going on in Normandy, the best part of northern France. Matters were worse in Brittany, where the peasantry were in a half-savage state ; and their condition, both in Champagne and Picardy, was miserable and hopeless, on account of their extreme ignorance, the bad system of tilling the land, the too great

subdivision of property into small patches, and the mistaken fiscal system of the country.

At the inn where the passengers of the *diligence* stopped to dine, uncle Ambroise Cartouche refreshed his nostrils with some *tabac* from a gold snuff-box which astonished the glistening eyes of his nephew—the young rascal was *born hanged* —and he determined that before the end of the journey the *tabatière* should be in his possession. In the night, therefore, whilst his uncle was snoring loudly in the coach, and all their fellow-travellers were asleep, Louis Dominique contrived to pick the pocket of his only friend, and concealed the gold snuff-box in some obscure part of his own person.

What was the mortification of uncle Ambroise, when thoroughly awake in the morning, and intending to indulge in a fresh and early pinch of the pungent powder, he discovered that the box was gone! It must be owned that his suspicion at once fell on his runaway nephew, who was fast asleep, or pretending to be so, and

his uncle very unceremoniously searched all the pockets of Cartouche narrowly, but without finding his box. He then put the other passengers to a great deal of inconvenience in feeling about every part of the *diligence;* then each and all of them became aggrieved and insulted at being individually suspected, and insisted on going before Monsieur le Maire of the next town at which they might stop. The only hope of uncle Ambroise was, that he had accidentally left it behind on the table of the inn, as in that case he would have been tolerably certain to have regained the *tabatière*, as the servants of French hotels on the roads are proverbially honest; and, in nine instances out of ten, if an article of value were so found, it would be delivered by the servant to the proprietor of the inn, to be returned to the owner when inquired for.

Uncle Ambrose was very uneasy—the gold box had been the gift of his beloved wife on the last anniversary of their wedding-day; how

could he look her in the face again! The good man actually, between grief for his loss and a tenderness of thought for his amiable spouse, shed tears; and yet the obdurate little villain at his side exhibited no sign of compunction—he was without a conscience; he had not the secret tribunal at the bottom of his heart from which there is no appeal. A speedy punishment awaited him, however, for he had not been twelve hours in his uncle's house at Paris before he was seized with a typhoid form of disease, (probably communicated to him from the bedding of the beggar's lodging-house), which reduced him in the course of a fortnight almost to a skeleton, and then it was that, being sure he was nigh unto death, he confessed his crime against his excellent uncle, and produced the stolen property.

Kind-hearted, benevolent Ambroise! Thou didst not even scowl, nor, with a heart vitrified to pity, curse thy nephew; but, on the contrary, didst bring to his bed-side his sterner

father, to melt him with the sight of his son's emaciation. And such was the effect produced. From that day the invalid rapidly recovered, and at the end of a month again became a healthy inmate of his sire's domicile.

The honest old cooper gave his rascal of a son one more chance. On being convinced that Louis Dominique had stolen the hundred crowns from the box of the young Count Conconnas, he borrowed part of the money, made up the remainder from his hard earnings, and repaid the loss. Poor Fuseau, who had no power to prove that he had not committed the theft, remained in prison until his master came, apologised, cried like a poltroon, and, obtaining an order for his release, reinstated him in his service. It is an ill wind that blows nobody good, for the old Count Conconnas, who was a nobleman in heart, on hearing the case, and the false imprisonment of his son's valet, gave him the hundred crowns he did *not* steal as an indemnification. But it should not be omitted to men-

tion that Fuseau, who was a very shrewd fellow, got a cousin of his, who was a washerwoman, to tell the whole story to the laundress of the valet-de-chambre of the elder Count Conconnas, and to insinuate what might be the probable results to the young nobleman for keeping an innocent man in prison for so considerable a time, and merely on suspicion.

CHAPTER IV.

CARTOUCHE AND THE GRISETTE—HE MAKES ACQUAINTANCE WITH ANOTHER LADY, MORE USEFUL THAN ORNAMENTAL—HE INTRODUCES HIMSELF TO TWO CELEBRATED AUTHORS—A WEDDING FEAST—"HEAVEN SAVE ME FROM MY FRIENDS'—A SON IN LAW'S LETTER—MORE PRANKS BY CARTOUCHE—HE IS DESTINED FOR THE BASTILE.

AGAIN under the protection of his father, Cartouche might have prospered and become an honest being; but he had not the smallest atom of conscience; he believed that—

> "Conscience and nice scruples
> Are tares that abound in none but meagre soils,
> To choke the aspiring seeds of manly daring;
> Those puny instincts which in feeble minds,
> Unfit for great exploits, are miscall'd virtue."

His mother, too, was foolishly fond of him, and thought the dear youth a prodigy of clever-

ness. She one day remarked to a gossip, "I pity my Louis Dominique for having so much sense; for if he were a blockhead he would make his fortune, like his uncle."

He grew now considerably in stature, was firmly knit and handsome; he worked for a time at his father's trade, and sang right merrily as he handled the staves.

This was a happy and almost a regenerative epoch for Cartouche; but sorry are we to record that it was not doomed to last. His second fall he owed to the vanity of wishing to be thought what he was not, a thirst of admiration, and a woman.

In La Courtille lodged a *grisette*, by name Pelagie, a lace-mender by profession—one of a numerous class of females in Paris, neither gay nor over-virtuous, who contrive to moderate at once labour and pleasure; who go to church in the morning with their mothers, and to the ball at night with their gallants. Pelagie had large intelligent black eyes, an olive complexion, and

a natural flow of good spirits, which render a young female exceedingly fascinating. Whenever Louis Dominique passed the window at which she sat at work, she ceased her merry song, and gazed at him with a side-long glance, which pierced his heart through and through. He soon ventured to speak to her, and he experienced a perfectly new feeling—it was very agreeeble.

As for Pelagie, she soon fell into the dilemma described by a French author—"In the love of young women there are four ages. In the first period, they love every one; in the second, comes their consciousness of their own importance—they then love *themselves;* at the third period, a strange, inexplicable flame arises in their bosoms, and now they love—love much —love violently—but know not what they love; at the fourth period, the riddle is explained, their understanding is cleared—they love *some one.*" Pelagie became enamoured of Louis Dominique Cartouche.

Cartouche was dissatisfied with his own personal appearance—his dress was not sufficiently gay; he longed for his red-feathered hat; and he wanted the means to make some elegant presents to Pelagie. His father would not give him a sous. His evil star predominated, and he wandered to the Pont-Neuf, which is a busy thoroughfare at all hours; and, with admirable dexterity, he, in a very short space of time, made himself master of two watches, and several purses variously filled, but which were speedily emptied by him, and the purses thrown away. The watches were disposed of to a noted receiver of stolen goods, one Rebecca Mezzia, an elderly lady of Israelite persuasion, who gave him about a tenth part of the value of the pilfered articles. The watches found their way to England, as similar time-pieces stolen in London were made to perform a journey to Paris, through the agency of Madame Rebecca Mezzia; and by this clever interchange of property, detection of the various robberies rarely occurred. Besides,

there was always a ready sale, both in London and Paris, for the *foreign* article; for there are ladies and gentlemen who are never satisfied with the manufacture of their own country, but conceive it fashionable to be the possessors of that which has been made abroad; and, more particularly, if the articles should be prohibited or contraband. Louis Dominique was now enabled to present his beloved Pelagie with silk stockings, ribands, handkerchiefs, bottles of scent, and fans. But his father eyed with some doubt and suspicion the gay new scarlet hose with which he had decorated his own legs.

At the residence of Madame Rebecca Mezzia, Cartouche formed first the acquaintance, and subsequently, the friendship of several gentlemen of first-rate talent in the art of appropriation. Two of these were his especial intimates, Monsieur Thibault au Dé, and Monsieur Inigo. From these ingenious persons he received lessons to steal adroitly, and it was quite surprising what an apt and ready genius the pupil possessed; by

assiduity and industry he became ultimately so accomplished that he made it his boast that he had picked the pockets of almost every police officer in Paris, and come off undiscovered. And this was done merely for pastime, mingled with a tincture of bravado. It, however, gained him immense credit with his companions, whose more cautious notions rather impelled them not to venture too near the persons of these same police people. Probably they might have been better known on visiting terms.

Cartouche occasionally accompanied his friends and instructors to the vicinity of the suburbs of Paris, where sometimes they would stop a coach, and rob the inmates of all they had about them. It was in one of these little agreeable excursions that they encountered the two celebrated authors, Alain René le Sage, and Bernard le Bovier de Fontenelle, while taking an evening airing in a carriage. To rob an author is at the best a very shabby transaction.

The affair was publicly recorded by Le Sage,

who drew up the following pleasant advertisement, and which was also printed as a handbill, and distributed in the *cafés*.

"WHEREAS,

"Six gentlemen (all of the same honourable profession), having been more than ordinarily put to it for a little pocket money, did on the 10th instant, in the evening, near St. Denis, borrow of two persons (in a coach) a certain sum of money, without staying to give bond for the repayment: and whereas, fancy was taken to the hat, peruke, cravat, sword, and cane, of one of the creditors, which were all lent as freely as the money:—these are, therefore, to desire the said six worthies, how fond soever they may be of the other loans, to unfancy the cane again, and send it to the Café Pourcegnac, on the Boulevards, it being only valuable as having been the gift of a friend."

Cartouche, on seeing this bill, determined to

test the hardihood of his companions, and proposed that one of the gang should go to the Café Pourcegnac, and deliver up the walking-stick. As a matter of course they individually declined, when Cartouche, smiling with contempt at them, swore that he would carry it back to the owner himself.

Le Sage was seated in the Café Pourcegnac, conversing with Charles Rollin (famous for his skill in the *belles lettres*), when Cartouche, with the greatest effrontery, walked into the room. He had in his hand one of the printed bills, and he quietly enquired of a *garçon* if he knew which of the Messieurs had issued the advertisement. The waiter pointed to the table at which sat the novelist and historian.

Louis Dominique approached them, and, bowing low, laid the cane and the bill between them ; and, with great gravity, bowing again, he left their part of the coffee-room, and shortly afterwards quitted the house. Le Sage was so struck at this adventure that he could not credit

that it was his cane that was returned. Rollin laughed loudly, but inquired why Fontenelle was not also stripped of his portable habiliments? Le Sage replied that the great fabulist had gone out on that evening in *déshabille*, and that he had not anything on worth stealing. As the *garçon* approached the table to replenish the coffee cups of the authors, he discovered that the small silver sugar dish was missing. Alack! the rogue Cartouche had carried it off as a memento—a clincher to his hardihood.

The cash he obtained from Madame Rebecca Mezzia enabled him to treat his *grisette* to the play: the dramas of Molière being at the period the standing dishes, and in high repute; one of them, entitled *Les Fourberies de Scapin*, was a favourite piece with Cartouche.

About this period, Cartouche *père* had arranged to fulfil a contract he had entered into some years previously, which was no less than to get his daughter (a very pretty girl) married. The young man to whom she was affianced was

well off in the world: he had succeeded to the business of his father, a timber-merchant, who had for many years supplied the honest cooper with the materials for his trade.

Monsieur Malastéque arrived in Paris, well provided with money, preparatory to his entering the blessed state of a bridegroom: and as he intended passing his honey-moon in the gay city, he had taken a small ready-furnished house to carry his pretty wife to.

Cartouche listened with greedy ears to the details which his father recounted of the amount of the property of his future son-in-law; and, without the slightest remorse, or thought of how it might affect the interests of his dear sister, he determined to have a finger in the pie. So he communicated his plans to his associates at Madame Rebecca Mezzia's.

Cartouche had ascertained that the cash of his future brother-in-law was carefully deposited in an iron box, and that it was kept in a chamber next to his bed-room.

The night was fixed on which they were to undertake the robbery, and Louis Dominique had great confidence in success, as Monsieur Malastéque was but a raw rustic. He had been seeing all the sights of Paris, and was wearied out, so that they guessed he would sleep soundly.

They had provided themselves with the customary tools of utility—picklocks, files, &c.; and after watching Malastéque into bed, they quietly climbed up the balcony, and made their way into the room by the window. But here they had reckoned without their host, for Monsieur Malastéque, having partaken of a very rich *matélote* of eels for his supper, and eaten a great quantity of melon afterwards, was suffering from dyspepsia to that degree that he could not close his eyes. Presently he heard a grating noise. At first he imagined that it was his indigestion, but he discovered that he was wrong, for the sounds proceeded from the next room; so he slipped silently out of bed, and, by the light of

the moon, saw three accomplished artists at work on his iron chest, while a fourth watched at the balcony to keep the coast clear. Malastéque took the opportunity to remark particularly the faces of these thieves, though he did not care much about the breaking open the box, as he had fortunately deposited his money in the Bank that very morning.

But when at last they got the chest open, three pair of hands dived into it at once, and finding it empty, the whole party commenced uttering the most horrid imprecations. Malastéque, with great presence of mind, overturned a heavy carved table, which caused an alarm, and at the same moment he bawled out, "Now! —the police!—fire on the thieves!—six of you come up;—fire!" Louis Dominique Cartouche, Thibault au Dé, Inigo, and his other friends, bolted with the utmost rapidity from the balcony, and scampered through the streets in different directions.

Cartouche *père* observed that Louis Domini-

que was very indifferent about an introduction to his brother-in-law, and he thought it was great impoliteness of conduct, that whenever Monsieur Malastéque came to visit his daughter at La Courtille, her brother should instantly decamp by the back door. On making inquiry of Louis Dominique for his reason for such behaviour, the young man modestly replied, "that for some time past, and since his *reformation*, he had made a vow as much as possible to avoid all intercourse with strangers.

"But this is to be your brother," said the father. "I assure you that your sister feels it as a sort of insult to her intended, and she is vexed with you; I therefore shall insist that you are present at our wedding feast, which is to be given the night prior to the marriage." Cartouche was compelled to assent. He did not think he had been seen while opening the chest, so, with a spirit of adventure, he determined to face it out; and as there was much preparation for festivity, he asked his father if

he might invite two or three young friends. The good old man, pleased to think he had got over the misanthropy of his son, agreed, provided that Louis Dominique would vouch for their good behaviour. Cartouche assured his father "that there were not three better-dressed gentlemen in all that quarter of Paris; that they were interesting and amiable;" and he might have added, with great truth, that they all three had quite "a taking way" with them.

Well, the important evening arrived, and Madame Cartouche had made immense preparations. The services of a neighbouring *restaurateur* had been enlisted for some days, as she had determined to do the thing in style, not only on account of the festive occasion, but to ake into consideration the high respectability of their guests, amongst whom were Monsieur Roide, *cordonnier des dames;* Madame Outarde, *tripière;* Monsieur *et* Madame Jouflou, *brasseurs:* Monsieur D'Entraves, *maréchal ferrant;* Madame and three Mademoiselles Fanfaronade,

couturieres, &c. &c. &c., who were all seated round a substantial entertainment of many dishes, and chattering in the height of French gaiety. Monsieur Malastéque was enthroned next to his blushing bride-elect.

Cartouche now entered, and was trying to find a place in some corner where he could not be seen, when the honest cooper, perceiving his son, bawled out, "Hey day, my boy Dominique! come hither to the table; let me welcome your friends—there are chairs opposite your brother-in-law."

Cartouche, followed by the well-dressed hang-dogs, his companions, Thibault au Dé and Inigo, were presently seated, and they began to make themselves very agreeable, though now and then slipping a silver fork into their breeches' pockets. Monsieur Malastéque was at that moment too much occupied with his love and a *dindon aux truffes* to notice the new comers; but presently Cartouche *père*, commanding all the wine-glasses to be filled, proposed, in a speech

more remarkable for its length than its elegance, "health and prosperity to the bridegroom elect." This was drank with enthusiasm, "*Vive l'Epoux.*" It was now the turn of Monsieur Malastéque to respond his grateful thanks; but as he had not been much accustomed to public speaking, he kept his eyes steadily fixed on the remains of the turkey, and in some embarrassment was at a loss for words. The guests were all attention, and Malastéque had got as far as "Ladies and gentlemen," when, dropping his hand from his bosom, he suddenly perceived Cartouche and the other ruffians, who had been filing away at his money-box! He could not utter another word. He imagined, seeing no less than four of them, that the whole company were depredators. He felt faint, his countenance assumed a greenish hue—he burst out into a cold perspiration, and then burst out of the room. He made his way into the street, and never stopped once until he got home, where he locked himself up in his chamber.

There was much consternation as to the cause of his sudden illness. Madame Cartouche attributed it to the quantity of supper, while the bride was certain that the feelings of Monsieur Malastéque were overpowered by the enthusiastic manner in which his health had been drunk.

Louis Dominique and his young friends now became a little restless, but were much relieved by the elder Cartouche proposing that they should go after Malastéque, and find out what was the matter. In the meantime, as they were rising, Monsieur Jouflou, the brewer, who was a bit of a wag, took up a table-spoon, and stuck it in the button-hole of his coat. Madame Cartouche inquired of him the reason for so doing; when Jouflou replied, "That he had observed the gentleman opposite, Monsieur Thibault au Dé (one of Louis Dominique's friends), pop a spoon in his pocket, and he imagined that they were each of them to have one on this joyous occasion."

The young friend apologised very gracefully,

and said, that if he had put a spoon in his pocket, he had done so in absence of mind, with which he was afflicted; and, feeling in his pocket, he produced the spoon, which he handed to Madame Cartouche, saying, "Good Heavens! Madame, how much I am indebted to your worthy friend yonder. What an aberration! Really, it might have been supposed that I had attempted to purloin the spoon, and my character would have been lost for ever."

The moment Cartouche and his scamps got into the street (under pretence of seeking Monsieur Malastéque), they simultaneously burst into a roar of laughter. As a matter of course, they did not trouble themselves much about the indisposition of the brother-in-law, but made their way to Madame Rebecca Mezzia's, to dispose of their superfluous plate. After their departure from the feast, Madame Fanfaronade remarked that they were extremely agreeable, well-bred, young gentlemen; and also observed "with what readiness of good nature they all

left their supper and wine to go in search of the invalid. That, for her part, she had three daughters, who would not be portionless, and it would give her much happiness to see them united to such *debonnaire* young fellows."

The Demoiselles Fanfaronade simpered, and looked sheepishly round the table. They all had their first finger of the left hand very much roughed in the skin by needlework, and they all scratched their lips.

The wine, the *ponche au rhum*, the jokes, and the songs, went round with characteristic vivacity; but the bride-elect began to be uneasy at the absence of her Strephon. Presently a mysterious-looking letter was delivered to Monsieur Cartouche *père*, which had been brought to the house by a porter. The old cooper opened the *billet*, hoping that it might be an order for a hundred new hogsheads, when, to his utter dismay, he read the following lines from Monsieur Malastéque (to himself), and they proved that if the young timber-merchant

was not gifted with eloquence, he had a very perspicuous style in his writing:—

"A MONS. CARTOUCHE PÈRE.

"Monsieur Malastéque presents his compliments to Monsieur Cartouche *père*, and I am sorry to say I never received such a dreadful shock in all my life, and which caused me to leave the table so suddenly. Monsieur Malastéque would not have been so rude as to have quitted Mademoiselle and the other ladies, if I had not been, to my astonishment, confronted with four thieves, who the other night, broke open my iron box, thinking to rob Monsieur Malastéque, only I had luckily placed my money in the Bank of Paris —so these four thieves were disappointed. Monsieur Malestéque distinctly saw the countenances of the four thieves on that occasion, and I regret to affirm, on my sacramental oath, that the second time Monsieur Malastéque beheld these four thieves, was at the supper-table this evening, on Monsieur Cartouche's premises;

and it grieves me to remark that one of these four thieves was Louis Dominique Cartouche, whom Monsieur Malastéque saw as plainly as possible, and I could not be mistaken, with his horrible leer when he saw my chest was empty. Monsieur Malastéque entreats Monsieur Cartouche *père* not to be angry with him, although his son was one of the four thieves that tried to rob him. I never was so frightened in all my life, and it was lucky there was a marble table for Monsieur Malasteque to throw down to alarm the four thieves, of which Louis Dominique was one of the greatest.

"Under these circumstances, sir, what is to be done? I cannot marry into a family connected with thieves; and what is more, Monsieur Malastéque cannot mix himself up with such company. I have been brought up respectably in the country with my father, and should not like to be obliged to furnish the timber for the gallows of any of my relations, friends, or connexions, although it be my trade.

Monsieur Malastéque solicits Monsieur Cartouche *père* to condole with Mademoiselle, and tell her I think it is a great pity her brother is a thief, as owing to that, it must break off the match.

"Monsieur Malastéque offers his humble salute to Mademoiselle, and I am much chagrined that such a shocking thing should have happened. Kiss the hands of her mother for me.

"Your humble servant to command,

"Etienne Victor Malastéque.

"P.S.—You shall have the two loads of oak plank next Thursday; Monsieur Malastéque is very unhappy."

On the perusal of the above specimen of epistolatory correspondence, in which the third and first persons were so confounded, the cooper was perplexed. It was not the style of his intended son-in-law (for in fact he did not discover *that*), but the matter of fact that posed him. His mis-

chievous son had been a depredator before. Oh! what a wretched situation for a father, and how many an honest and well-intentioned affectionate parent has been consigned broken-hearted to his grave by the heedless, heartless, conduct of his offspring; nurtured with unremitting care, cherished by fondness—educated probably at an expense beyond the father's means, his own comforts reduced to privations to pay for the schooling—and, after all, the unnatural junior's only display of talent has been made by crime to crush his progenitor.

The wedding party broke up very unpleasantly, Mademoiselle Cartouche commencing the first of a series of fainting fits; not so much that she was seriously attached to poor Monsieur Timber-merchant, but that she had made up her mind to be married. It had been her only offer, and, under such circumstances, a young woman cannot brook disappointment; besides, her wedding clothes had been purchased. What was to console her for not having been seen by the neigh-

bours in her large-patterned silk manteau, her new fashioned head lappets, her pink satin shoes, with buckles manufactured especially by their distinguished guest, Monsieur Roide, for the occasion? Oh! it was enough to turn a virgin utterly wild.

Equally disagreeable was it to Madame Cartouche, on collecting her articles of silver at the end of the evening, to discover that three forks, two spoons, and a pepper-box, had absconded, vanished, flitted away, besides Monsieur Malastéque.

Old Cartouche was in despair. To hope for any reformation in the character of his scamp of a son was now fruitless, and he began seriously to turn over in his mind, that the only means to save Louis Dominique from the gallows, would be making interest at court to procure a *lettre de cachet* to remove the wicked young dog into the Bastile. But this difficult matter could not be accomplished. If Cartouche, indeed, had written a satirical verse on one of the royal mis-

tresses, or had he been lucky enough to have sneezed at an archbishop, free quarters would have been provided for him in that formidable fortress, originally erected for the protection of the eastern side of the good city of Paris, but in 1634 converted into the strongest state prison in Europe: where the detention of the unfortunate offender was arbitrary, and the duration of his captivity never specified. No possible channel of communication with the relatives or friends of the prisoner could take place, but through the medium of the governor. He could suppress any applications as he thought fit; and he was generally interested in the victims being detained, as he contracted with the government for the maintenance of the prisoners, and derived a profit therefrom. It was, therefore, almost hopeless to think of a release.

Cartouche failed in obtaining the honour of being introduced into such good company; but his father accidentally falling in with an old monk of St. Lazare, who, hearing the detail of

the offences committed, advised that the son, to keep him out of present mischief, should receive a year's discipline in that monastery; that he (the monk) had been an eye-witness of the salutary effects of spare diet, confinement to a cell, and occasional flagellation, and that many young sinners had come out again quite altered in their persons and manners. Cartouche *père* determined to follow this advice; but the difficulty was first to find his son, and, secondly, to convey him to the monastery.

He went to the Jesuits' College, where he sought the valet Fuseau; and he was perfectly aware that the latter worthy would be delighted to revenge himself by playing a trick on Louis Dominique, in return for the scrape in which he had involved him. He requested Fuseau to go in search of his reprobate offspring, and to persuade him to return home, as forgiveness for the past would be the result. The valet of Count Concomas undertook the task; for besides feeling that a twelvemonth's

discipline at St. Lazare would be highly advantageous to Cartouche, he could not forget his own six weeks' confinement, for which he was indebted entirely to his young friend.

CHAPTER V.

CARTOUCHE IS CONVEYED TO A PENITENTIARY, BUT DECLINES ENTERING—HE TAKES A PROVINCIAL TRIP—CARTOUCHE MAKES THE SOUTH OF FRANCE TOO HOT TO HLOD HIM—OF THE EXTRAORDINARY ADVENTURES THAT BEFEL HIM ON THE ROAD.

Louis Dominique now took up his residence in the house of Madame Rebecca Mezzia, occupying a bed-room, for which the old lady charged him exorbitantly, and also made a proviso that she was to be paid daily; this stipulation with the gentlemen who lodged with her being deemed perfectly necessary. The old Jewess would have nothing to do with their board. She lived in her own way, according to the peculiar tenets of her faith; was partial to fried carp and other scaled fish, delighted in a German

stew, attended the synagogue scrupulously, and dealt in all sorts of stolen goods.

Cartouche, who had ever an excellent appetite, one day passed a butcher's, and perceiving a delicate griskin of pork hanging up, recollected that he had nothing in the house for his supper. To unhook the meat, poke it up the back of his coat, and slink off, was the work of three seconds. He went to Madame Rebecca's, and requested to have it cooked and reserved for him until the evening. His hostess affected considerable abhorence at a portion of the unclean beast finding its way into her kitchen. With some very unpleasant reflections on it, the griskin was roasted, and put by on a clean dish, to be eaten cold for Cartouche's supper. Louis Dominique was quite certain that the said supper would be perfectly secure on the score of his landlady's religious persuasion and scruples. But he reckoned without his hostess, for three nieces of Madame Rebecca Mezzia, with dark lustrous eyes, luxuriant black hair, and aquiline

noses, and whose surname was Lazarus, had walked from the opposite side of Paris, to call upon their aunt, and poor dears! required some refreshment. Madame Rebecca, who was really partial to the girls, placed some unleavened bread before them; but perceiving from the altered looks of the three pretty Jewesses that they expected something more substantial, she thought she would throw herself on the gallantry of Monsieur Cartouche, her lodger, and treat her visitors at his expense. She accordingly proceeded to the pantry, and placed the savoury viand before the young ladies. It must be owned that they had walked all the way from St. Denis, so the griskin was soon picked to the very bones, without their caring whether it had ever been entered into by a devil.

Much refreshed, they chatted and sung cheerfully. After staying with their aunt until nearly dusk, they took their departure. Cartouche, coming home from a long ramble, had got up his appetite to that point of perfection which

causes the mouth to water when you anticipate the enjoyment of a favourite dish, and he begged of Madame Mezzia that she would let him have his supper.

"Ah, Monsieur Cartouche," said Rebecca, "how delighted you would have been."

"With what?" he inquired.

"Oh, my dear, with three luscious young creatures. They passed all the afternoon here, and you absent!"

"Aye, indeed!" replied Cartouche.

"My nieces, the beautiful Lazarus'. I never beheld such sparkling eyes, nor whiter teeth. So help me Heaven! the teeth alone would make a pearl necklace. How I wished you had been at home. They were so witty, too—not second-hand, but all bran new. Monsieur would have been up to the ears in love with them. Such lovely round arms, and taper fingers."

Louis Dominique was excited by the glowing encomiums of the old Jewess, but thought her

somewhat prolix in her description, particularly when he had asked for the supper for which his bowels craved.

"The youngest girl Leah is the prettiest creature of the three. And how the spotted turban became her polished marble forehead," continued Rebecca. "And then, Rachael's long silken eye-lashes. Ah, but nothing can possibly equal the beautiful bust of Zarah."

Cartouche again gently hinted that he was hungry. The old lady, not taking any notice of this, recommenced, "And it would have done you good, Monsieur, to have heard their sweet and flexible voices, when they sang some Hebrew melodies. Rachael went up so high I thought she never would have come down again; and Leah trilled down so low that I imagined she was singing at the bottom of a well; while Zarah tickled my lute until I believed it was going into fits."

Louis Dominique now interrupted her, and asked if she had dressed his griskin of pork.

Rebecca replied in the affirmative, and added, that although it was no favourite food of hers, she was certain it must have been very delicious, for she had never, in all her life, seen three beautiful girls eat so heartily of it.

"Jewesses eat pork!" ejaculated Cartouche, faintly.

"They did not know it was pork, my dear," replied Madame Mezzia. "I was perfectly aware that you would not be angry at giving a supper to three such charming fascinating creatures, so I told them it was fatted passover lamb."

"Is it *all* gone?" asked Cartouche.

"Every morsel," answered Rebecca. "You would have been transported to have seen them eat."

"Probably," muttered the disappointed Cartouche, sullenly. "But as the meat was so good, I think you deprived your Israelite nieces of the greatest pleasure of all."

"How?" asked the old lady.

"By not telling them that it was interdicted

food. You should have told them it was pork, and then let them enjoy the sin of eating it."

"Oh fie! fie! fie! How depraved!—that would have been quite contrary to my principles," replied the old lady.

"Plague take your principles, and you too," said Cartouche. "I don't intend to say anything that may appear to be impolite, but I heartily wish, that before your hungry harpies of nieces had gobbled up my supper, that they had all gone to the devil." So saying, he left the house, and banged the street-door after him.

In this moody fit, he immediately came face to face with the valet Fuseau, who was seeking him. Cartouche was at first cowed with the sudden rencontre, but perceiving a smile on the face of the valet, his confidence was restored, and he said, "Ah! my old friend—how goes the world with you?"

"Brisk as champagne," replied Fuseau; "I am rich enough to treat you to a bottle, and laugh over old times."

"Have with you," eagerly exclaimed Louis Dominique; "I have just been done out of a supper."

Cartouche accompanied the valet of Count Conconnas to a tavern, where, ordering a pullet and a bottle, these worthies completely renewed their former intimacy. The fowl and a salad discussed, Cartouche recovered the tone of his stomach, and as the glasses of wine disappeared rapidly, the tongue of Louis Dominique ran glibly, and he related all his adventures to Monsieur Fuseau, who, it would seem, agreed in opinion with the celebrated Roscommon—

> "Wise were the kings, who never chose a friend
> Till with full cups they had unmask'd his soul,
> And seen the bottom of his deepest thoughts."

And, at the same time, that the valet heard of Cartouche's rogueries, he became more confirmed in his purpose of getting him back into the hands of his father, that the necessary steps might be taken to immure the young rascal in the monastery of St. Lazare, and all for the good of his future well-doing in the world.

"To tell you the unaffected truth, my dear Louis Dominique" (and here the treacherous valet kissed him on both his cheek-bones), "I have seen your worthy father, and he is dreadfully distressed at the cause of your absence."

"What! old Hoops?" replied his dutiful son.

"Even so," said Fuseau; "and although almost distracted at the loss he has sustained by being deprived of a husband for your sister, he very sensibly looks to the point of luring him back again, by proving that you were not so depraved as was imagined by Monsieur Malastéque."

"My sister is a pretty girl," replied Cartouche, "and much too nice a morsel for that imbecile, wooden-headed nobody."

"Pshaw! tush!" said the valet, "you are too particular. In the last census that was taken of the population, Heavens! how the female sex preponderated. It was to such an extent, that husbands will be scarce for the next thirty years; and then, to add to that, how many of our poor

young fellows have been sacrificed in the long ambitious war with England and the allies—"

Here a gentleman stepped up to their table, and touching his three-cocked hat politely, said, "No conversation on politics."

"And why not?" asked Cartouche, boldly.

The gentleman replied, "I am an officer of the police, and if you continue to depreciate our glorious government and Grand Monarque, I shall do myself the honour to invite you to accompany me to the Conciergerie."

Fuseau and Cartouche turned pale, and were silent.

What a beautiful order of affairs!—how admirable the system. How dared any one to hazard a political opinion? If our hero had continued half-a-dozen more anti-ruler sentiments, he would have rendered himself an eligible candidate for the Bastile, and saved his father and friends all the trouble and expense they were enduring for him. Again, we repeat, what a pity it was that he did not continue his auda-

city. It might have preserved him from the last resource the laws could eventually offer him.

Fuseau presently prevailed on Louis Dominique to accompany him home to his father's house. Under the influence of the wine, and a tolerable stock of self-conceit, he perfectly believed that the whole affair could be easily patched up. When they arrived at La Courtille, the honest cooper, who was an early riser, had retired to rest; they, however, obtained admission, and Cartouche was once more in bed under the parental roof.

In the morning his father was by the side of his pallet; and, with a stern air, told him that he hoped his conscience had sufficiently rebuked him, and that he should not revert to the painful subject; but he did not think his mother and sister would let him off so quietly. Louis Dominique professed great penitence, and hoped, with the kind aid of his father, that he might obtain the forgiveness of his other relatives. He

now perceived that his father was attired in his best holiday suit, and he received his directions to get up and dress himself, as he, the elder Cartouche, was going, that morning, to enter into an extensive contract for hogsheads and puncheons for government, and he wished his son to accompany him, as a witness of the engagement.

Louis Dominique was delighted at this mark of parental confidence, which he felt, and admitted, he did not deserve. The old gentleman then went down stairs to see whether a hired coach had arrived. "For," said he, "when you go to effect a government contract, appear as if you were in easy circumstances, and then those with whom you are about to deal will not haggle nor beat you down."

Cartouche dressed himself, and perceiving on a bureau three new napkins, he totally forgot all his remorse, and, without any inquiry as to whom they might belong, they found their way, from the mere habit of appropriation, into his coat pocket.

His father presently summoned him, and they entered a *fiacre*, which was at the door. As Louis Dominique looked up at the window of his mother's room, he saw her gazing at him from behind a curtain, with her eyes flooded with tears. His heart slightly smote him. He imagined them to proceed from sheer anger and vexation, whilst, in truth, the maternal parent believed that she was taking a last glance of her unprincipled son, for at least twelve months, which she presumed he was about to pass in penitence and incarceration.

The coach drove on with the father and son, and rattled through the old streets of Paris in the direction of the Rue St. Denis. Presently they drew up at an ominous-looking building, very unlike a government office. Cartouche *père* stepped out, with some mystery, and pulled the bell, and a lay brother of St. Lazare, who acted as porter, peered through a wicket. Louis Dominique was told, by his father, to remain for a minute or two in the coach, and he would re-

turn to him. The old man then entered the portal of the convent.

Strong suspicions now crossed the mind of Cartouche, His father had been too cunning in his measures. What the devil could the brethren of St. Lazare want with a number of puncheons and hogsheads? Louis Dominique guessed at the parental arrangements; he recollected the afflicted look of his mother; and he beheld four men advancing from another door of the monastery, who had very much the appearance of exempts. He had no doubt whatever that he was betrayed, and that these fellows were coming to arrest him. Cartouche was a lad of genius—

> "The keen spirit
> Seizes the prompt occasion, makes the thought
> Start into instant action, and at once
> Plans and performs, resolves and executes."

How fortunate it was that he recollected the three stolen napkins—what a treasure they proved in his present situation! He first tied up

his cocked hat in one of the napkins somewhat in the form of a dish; he took off his coat and peruke, and twisted the second napkin round his head, so as to represent a night-cap; and the third, he inserted in his waistband, apron fashion. He then opened the coach door on the opposite side gently, so as not to disturb the coachman, who was on the box; and thus he was most admirably disguised as a *restaurateur* bearing a dish (his hat). He walked calmly and gravely along, passing the exempts who were awaiting the order to seize upon the gentleman in the coach, and got away safely, with the loss of his coat and wig.

Presently, Cartouche *père* returned with the principal of the monastery, and the familiars were beckoned up; but the bird had flown, leaving a few of his feathers behind him. The father was perfectly at a loss to imagine how he had contrived to escape.

Louis Dominique traversed several streets, still in his *costume de la cuisine;* and it is so

common a sight in the cooking city of Paris to see the white caps and aprons dashing about, that his appearance caused no surprise. He was aware that it would be prudent to leave the capital. He had some money in his pocket remaining from Madame Rebecca Mezzia's purchases, but he was without a coat. At this moment he had arrived at his old quarters, the college of Clermont—he reflected on the perfidy of Fuseau. He entered the gates—still passing for a cook's assistant—boldly went up the old stair-case, pushed open the door of the apartments of his old school-fellow, Count Conconnas, and made his way to the well remembered clothes-press, where he found a black coat belonging to the Count, which fitted him exceedingly well; he doffed his napkins, untied his hat, and within half an hour was in a diligence starting on the road to Bayonne.

We shall pass over a description of the journey, of the country, and of his fellow-travellers, and content ourselves with stating that he

arrived safe and sound in that ornament of the south of France, the commodious and handsome town of Bayonne; where, his finances dwindling, he re-commenced his system of pilfering, shop-lifting, swindling, and picking pockets, on the most extensive scale, and in the greatest variety of modes; in fact, he became a wholesale practitioner, and dealer in every sort of article.

At length he was smoked; and finding that Bayonne was becoming a little too hot to hold him, he one morning early, on the opening of the gates, marched out of the city very quietly, with his portmanteau under his arm—intending to make his way to Bordeaux, and try his fortune there; he travelled by the old road, which was more direct than that through Mont de Marsan. But as this journey was difficult to achieve on foot, Cartouche resolved on hiring a mule; so, at an inn in the suburbs of St. Esprit, he struck up a bargain for an animal, which, in spite of all the eulogiums bestowed on it by its owner, was but a sorry jade, though

she was bred on the Spanish frontier. The poor beast had been hard-worked and ill-fed, and Cartouche repented that he had ever mounted her back; for it was like riding upon a saw, the teeth of which he could feel through his worn-out saddle. As she stumbled at every other step, her rider felt it necessary to remind her that he wore spurs, which made the mule sagaciously wince in her belly, till he pricked his own heels—for, be it known, she was not one of those wide-backed Flanders animals, that will stretch a cavalier's legs two yards asunder. With all her good qualites, however, Cartouche determined at the end of the first stage, or at the very first opportunity, to get rid of the beast: and presently he arrived at a hostelry, and seeing the stable-door open, he at once rode his mule in, and guided her into the darkest stall he could find in the building. His object in this was because he perceived a young lady, who had the care of the stables, come clattering across the filthy court in her *sabots*, making

more noise than if she was running in cocoa-nut shells. Cartouche stood in the door-way to intercept the light between the large black eyes of the she-ostler and the figure of his mule; and observing that there were three other mules feeding in the stable, one of which was covered with a horseman's cloak, he pulled out a crown of gold, and put it into the hand of the damsel, ordering her to bring a measure of barley and the change. (He sent the gold piece to gain a little time.) But the moment the girl's face was turned the other way to re-enter the *cabaret*, he whipped off the long cloak from the mule, backed him out of the stall, led his own beauty of a beast into its place, threw the horseman's mantle over her in the exact form it was before, and led his new mule into the dark corner. He had scarcely accomplished this before he heard the cocoa-nuts rattling across the yard, and Angelique appeared with a sieve of barley. Cartouche took the measure out of her hand, and remarked that he always made it a practice to feed his own beast.

He then received his change, and gave the girl a small gratuity, bidding her to fetch him a tumbler of wine mulled with spice. Away trotted the cocoa-nuts; and Cartouche, with the consciousness that exchange is no robbery, led out the fresh mule, and mounting him, after he had strapped his portmanteau to the saddle, gave him a touch with his rippers, and set off at a swinging trot. A turn of the road soon put him out of sight of the hostelry, and Cartouche congratulated himself exceedingly on the vast improvement he had made in his means of travelling; nor did Angelique, when she came out with the mulled wine, discover the fraud—for the poor mule was too much occupied with the fodder in the rack to make the slightest objection to the cloak with which it was covered—and finding that the traveller was gone, mule and all, she concluded that, as the fire had been low, and they were a long time warming the wine, the stranger could wait no longer.

The best of this was, that the good mule which

Cartouche had taken away was the property of a Monsieur Sebastien Escroc, a minor officer belonging to the criminal court of Bayonne. He was reckoned a very sharp-sighted fellow at knowing a thief, though he was not so well skilled as he imagined, since he knew not himself. Sebastien Escroc had been sent, by order of council, to make inquiries respecting an extensive burglary which had been committed at a château at St. Sever, where plate, money, and jewels were carried off. The seigneur of the village had despatched a messenger with information of the robbery to the authorities at Bayonne. Judge the surprise, then, of this important personage, while he was making his inquiries in the inn, on discovering the wretch of a mule underneath his cloak, and his own animal, with its appointments, vanished. Monsieur Sebastien Escroc, though an officer of justice, was very superstitious, and at first attributed the transformation to witchcraft; bnt when he heard that *a gentleman* had been in the stable,

he thought it proper to make the best use of a bad bargain, and go on in pursuit of the gentleman, who had, probably in mistake, taken the wrong mule. In the meantime, Cartouche pushed briskly on through the cross country road between St. Sever and Roquefort, with little apprehension of pursuit, and less of *apprehension.* He was aware that the proprietor of the mule could not tell which way he had decamped; and perceiving an inn, with more comfortable accommodation than was common, he resolved to stop and regale; for, be it remarked, a thief always conscientiously pays due regard to his stomach, if he never *pays* anything else. He therefore pulled up, and dismounted at the Fleur-de-Lys, giving his mule, with a very consequential air, to the *garçon d'écurie.*

He then, with a keen appetite, discussed the merits of a dish of cabbage soup, and pulled a lanky, scraggy, fowl into strings, which he devoured, filling up any vacancies in his interior with a greasy omelette and a bottle of capital Bordeaux.

Whilst sitting at his ease in his inn, Cartouche was looking at the beautiful prospect from the window, when he saw, in the distance, a portly man lugging a mule along with some difficulty. Cartouche could not be mistaken as to the identity of the animal; there was but one of its appearance in the world. Camel-necked, pig-headed, with one eye, and that looking like an oyster, a pious mule, that was frequently down on its knees, and knew what fasting was, and yet if the rider said "*go fast*," the animal could not comprehend him.

Cartouche, who had a very sharp sight, saw Monsieur Sebastien Escroc, whose person he knew very well—so well, indeed, that it had always been his especial care to keep out of his way—Escroc holding the eminent office of principal thief-taker at Bayonne. Monsieur Escroc did not know Cartouche; but the latter worthy was perfectly aware that there were in the possession of the functionary of the police written descriptions of his figure, dress, &c., which had

been delivered to the authorities by sundry trades-people and others with whom Cartouche had dealings during his visit to Bayonne, and in which he had not been over scrupulous.

To get out of the inn, mount the mule, and trot off was the first impulse. No! Sebastien was in sight, and it was doubtless the thief-taker's mule which he had stolen; so Cartouche thought he would make a virtue of necessity, and return him the beast.

Cartouche ran across to the stable, and found the ostler. He pulled off his coat, and ordered Jocrisse to beat the dust from it; he then in a trice whipped off his long jack-boots, and gave them to Jocrisse, with directions to grease them (blacking in those days not having been invented). He borrowed of the ostler a blue smock-frock and a pair of *sabots*. As Jocrisse went to another out-building with the coat and boots, Cartouche popped up a ladder into a loft, wherein he very correctly conjectured he should find the materials for the simple toilet of the

stable-boy; here he dipped his own brown head of hair into a pail of water, threw a handful or two of flour over his locks, and put on a greasy cap which was lying on a bundle of hay. He then came down the ladder, and perceived that there were three other mules in the stable, besides that of Monsieur Escroc. So he immediately led them all out round a large stone trough or cistern filled with water, and there he stood unbuckling their head-gear that the beasts might drink. Jocrisse peeped out astonished; but Cartouche bawled to him, "Get you on wth the boots, I will water the mules." And Jocrisse disappeared.

We have already acquainted our readers that Cartouche would have made an excellent actor; but the genius of his ambition did not lie that way; his accomplishments led him rather to the tact of the successful author, as he had great dexterity in appropriating and disguising the property of others. So, when Monsieur Sebastien Escroc arrived, Cartouche, assuming the

air of a country lout, began brushing a mule down with a broom, and whistling. Escroc let go the bridle of the beauty, who, by natural instinct, dipped its nose into the water-trough, and drank as if it intended to transform itself from a sorry mule into a river-horse. He quickly espied his own mule, and said to Cartouche, "Hark ye, boy, who brought this beast hither?"

Cartouche replied, in the *patois* of the province, "That a cavalier had left it in their stable three hours previously, and was to return for it on the next day."

"This mule is mine," exclaimed the officer.

"Monsieur must give me some better proof than that, if it so please him," answered Cartouche, meekly.

"Let me speak to thy master instantly," said Escroc.

"And I shall speak to my master, too, before I part with the mule that is entrusted to my charge," responded Cartouche; "it is good to keep an eye on the cat when you watch your meat.

"What art thou mumbling?" asked the officer.

Cartouche, scratching the ear of his mule, replied, "When you trust to the dog, the wolf often slips in the sheep-fold."

"What meanest thou to insinuate, fool?" demanded Escroc, sharply.

"Monsieur," said Cartouche, gravely, "never trust gipsies, the month of April, nor great men. God preserve me from a young barber to practise on my chin."

Escroc, finding he could not make anything of the *garçon*, seized his own mule, led her into the stable, fastened the door, and said, "In the puissant name of the Supreme Criminal Council of Bayonne, I arrest this beast." He then strode towards the inn, to refresh himself, and make enquiries.

Having made a thorough investigation in the house of entertainment (as he imagined), he was much vexed he could hear no news of the depredators of whom he was in search; nor

could he find any body to bring into trouble; for Monsieur Escroc was of that order of persons who desire no more than to turn up a subject fitly disposed, and they know how to give it a form. He then complained to the hostess, a brisk little Basque woman, of the utter stupidity of her stable-boy. She acknowledged that Jocrisse had not much wit, but then he was honest, and kind to the beasts he had in his charge. At this moment, Jocrisse came from the out-building with Cartouche's coat and boots. Not seeing Louis Dominique in the yard, he went towards the house with them in his hand. At the sight of the coat, Monsieur Sebastien Escroc, who professionally had an excellent memory as to all the descriptions of the violators of the law that had been entered in his pocket-book, said, "Wait a moment, young man; let me look at that coat."

Jocrisse was surprised, but gave it to him. The official examined it narrowly, turned it inside and out, felt in the pockets, and referred to

his book. "*Dressed in a green, square-cut frock, laced and frogged with dark marone, marone silk buttons, coat lined with black calimanco; stolen by Louis Dominique Cartouche from Alexandre Cæsar Pompey Puce, tailor.*"

Escroc assumed an authoritative air, and said, "In the name of the Supreme Criminal Council of Bayonne, I arrest this coat. Do the boots belong to the same person from whom you received the coat?"

Jocrisse answered in the affirmative.

The officer then repeated gravely, "I arrest these boots."

Escroc proceeded to demand of Jocrisse, "where was the owner of the coat and boots?"

Jocrisse simply replied, that he had left him with the mule he had brought with him in the stable. The officer strode across the yard, and there found Cartouche rubbing up a bit and a bridle. He accosted Louis Dominique sharply, and interrogated him as to the person of the man who brought the mule, referring as before to his book.

"Olive complexion?"

"Yes, sir."

"Chesnut hair?"

"Yes, sir."

"Nose aquiline?"

"Yes, sir; something like mine."

"Yours, you clown?"

"Yes, sir; the gentleman was about my height, and seemed in a vast hurry to get away."

"I do not wonder at it," remarked the functionary, "the rascal had stolen my mule; but I have, by a wonderful effort, recovered the animal, and have him now under lock and key."

"Yes, sir," answered Cartouche, with assumed simplicity; "the bread that costs nothing is always best tasted; but he who bites sour fruit makes ugly faces."

"Confound your musty sayings," exclaimed Escroc; and he turned his back on the supposed ostler.

At this moment was discovered, winding up the road in the distance, a funeral procession,

attended by two persons in religious habits, and four laymen in deep mourning. These surrounded and followed a car which was drawn by two mules, on which rested the coffin. They advanced slowly until they arrived at the inn. The two priests stopping, told the others that they should rest there a short time, and sing a hymn to the repose of the soul of the dead. Accordingly, they broke out in an "*Ad te, Domine, levavi,*" enough to bring the sign of the inn down. We have already observed that Monsieur Escroc was of a superstitious turn, and had a particular aversion to anything relating to the dead. One of the priests, perceiving him to hang back, took him firmly by the hand, and led him towards the bier, and begged him to look at the coffin. The officer, who had great apprehensions of converse with the inhabitants of the other world, struggled to get away, alleging that he had no curiosity, and that the finest corpse in the world was unpleasant twenty-four hours after departure. So Escroc made his

way to the stable, mounted his own mule, which proceeding no one opposed, and added to his baggage the coat and boots of Cartouche as testimonials. Cartouche had the effrontery to hold the stirrups of the functionary, wishing him a safe journey. He also assisted him in buckling on his paraphernalia. Escroc told him to look sharp.

"I am always for quick work," replied Cartouche. "Rather cut my throat with a sharp razor than tickle me to death with a straw."

"Thou eternal talker," said Escroc, and he set his mule in motion.

CHAPTER VI.

CARTOUCHE IS HIRED AS A MOURNER AT A FUNERAL—HE WITNESSES A STRANGE SCENE, TAKES AN UNEXPECTED RIDE, AND INTERRUPTS A BISHOP'S DINNER—HE IS INDUCED TO BECOME A CHURCHMAN.

In the meantime, the priests and mourners had placed the coffin very reverentially and carefully on a long table under a portal, and they had a supper laid out on another table close by, so that they could watch their precious charge. Cartouche went in and seated himself without any ceremony, and shortly observed that grief must have made the mourners very dry, for they rapidly emptied one flagon of wine after another. They then, with enormous appetites, attacked the supper, washing down

the substantials with Medoc and Cogniac. The landlady of the Fleur-de-Lys was somewhat surprised to see these attendants on death so little concerned, and very innocently said, "Good gentlemen, keep up your spirits, right are ye to make merry, for I dare say there are others that lament for that poor body you bring. God give it rest."

The principal mourner, who sat at the head of the table, answered, "Ah, Madame! it is indeed very certain that the house from whence this body, as you call it, came, is now under great affliction; and what grieves them the more is, that this person was taken away suddenly, to their eternal sorrow."

As the landlady gazed with a piteous air, she was astonished that the clergy and mourners all burst out laughing at the remark of their principal; he, however, endeavoured to turn it off by saying, "Pray Heaven we may carry him safe to the place appointed! and be not scandalized to see us take a little refreshment; the fatigue

of attending a-foot requires good nourishment. Have you not another cold turkey?" He then drank the hostess's health, and putting a glass of wine into her hand, desired she would pledge him.

There never before were assembled, even at an Irish funeral, such a company of swilling mourners. It appeared as if they were endeavouring to drown their grief outright. Presently the chief mourner turned to Cartouche, and offered him a replenish from his flagon, the excellent wine of the country being drawn from the cask. Louis Dominique, nothing loath, accepted the offer; but as the liquor circulated, he could not help remarking that not only the mourners, but even the two religious men, let loose their tongues in a strange manner. One gave an account of how he had picked his father's padlock, to get at some broad pieces he wanted. Another related that when he quitted Bordeaux, he was so rude as to bid nobody farewell, for fear of being arrested by

his creditors. The eldest priest boasted of the high favour he was in with many courtezans; whilst the younger holy man offered to bet twenty crowns, or a new peruke, that he was the father of the most numerous progeny of all the company. He then began eugolising and enumerating the Julies, Marguerites, Arabelles, Susannes, and Isabelles, with whom he had the honour to be intimate.

"*In vino veritas*," thought Cartouche.

And now the wine proved too powerful for one of the mourners, for, after reeling and stammering for a few seconds, he fell on the floor in a species of fit, and then into a profound sleep, interrupted only by a heavy snore. This did not in the least interfere with the conviviality of his companions, who only remarked, in their flash jargon, or *argot*, that the "*mion*" was "*piolé*." On hearing this, Cartouche observed, in the same eloquent diction, that the "*licheur*" was "*sous le marpeaux*." The two clergymen stared to find that Cartouche under-

stood them, and put several other questions to him, which he readily answered; for although he was now aware of the society into which he had been thus introduced, he could not help wondering what these persons could be doing with a corpse in a coffin. Evening was now coming on, when the leader of the party, who was also the most sober of them—not that he had taken less drink than any of the others, but that his head was harder—deemed it time to depart, because it was not their intention to lie there that night: so the mules were brought out, and harnessed to the car. He then paid the hostess very liberally, who in return gave them a thousand blessings, and offered up many brief prayers for the departed.

Every attempt to wake the fellow on the floor proving unavailing (for he was absolutely dead drunk), they desired the landlady to take care of the man that was asleep, who would follow them when he awaked, and considering that the mourner's habit he had on was of no farther use

to him, they quickly stripped him of it, seeming desirous to hire another man in his stead. The leader, after a short consultation with his comrades, took Cartouche on one side, and thus politely addressed him :—

"Monsieur, to put aside disguise, I apprehend I have the honour to address a first-rate professor in the art of thieving?"

Cartouche modestly replied that he had made some little progress in his studies.

"We have found thee," said the leader, "a jovial companion at supper. Thou hast a look of a man of determined courage, can talk *argot*, and doubtless have a good guard; wilt thou join us in an adventure? If so, without at present asking further questions, put on that mourning suit, and fill up yonder sleeper's vacant post."

Cartouche, recollecting that his coat and boots were in the custody of Monsieur Sebastien Escroc, and that the officer had been in his presence, thought that he could not get better across the country than with this agreeable

company (the dead body excepted). So he put on the sable habiliments, and made an exchange with Jocrisse, giving his beauty of a mule for an old pair of boots, and returning him his frock and *sabots*; and off they set merrily, leaving their friend entranced under the power of Bacchus.

No sooner were they out of sight of the inn than they quitted the high road, and went across a very lone part of the country, at which the new mourner was not a little surprised, but he felt that he was with a set of men of whom it would not have been quite safe to ask impertinent questions; so on they travelled throughout the night, which at this period of the year was short. At about half-past three in the morning, the leader of the party ordered a halt in an extremely sinister-looking place, the habitation of wolves and wild boars. The leader, then, untying from the car a great wicker-bound bottle of brandy, which held at least a gallon, proposed that every one should drink, as they

were at their journey's end. Cartouche was much astonished at this. A pewter cup being produced, the clergyman and mourners each drank off a potent dram, when the chief said—

"Now, brethren, we are out of the reach of pursuit, even if the King of France wanted us. It is time to divide this body."

"Well said," answered the others, "This is a convenient place for our purpose; here we are secure from interruption."

Cartouche was never so startled in his life as at hearing this proposition, and he drew a little aside. A long and fierce discussion now arose amongst them as to what amount of share the new comer should have; and this dispute was mingled with horrible oaths, and a great deal more brandy. Cartouche had seen much of depravity, but he never before had fallen in with so peculiar a sight as that which now presented itself. Here was a bier, and the priests and mourners all vociferating and swearing together in a most infuriated manner, the brandy

having taken its full effect on the lees of the wine. The chief mourner vowed that Cartouche should receive an equal share with the rest; the others swore that he should not. From words they came to blows, drawing out short swords and daggers and pistols from under their sacerdotal and sable robes. At the sight of these warlike preparations, Louis Dominique —who had not any inclination to interfere with a parcel of drunken brawlers, and being rather foot-sore in Jocrisse's boots, which did not fit him—ventured to sit on the car on which the coffin was placed. The disputation did not cease for a moment, but increased violently, and the antagonists cut away at each other with their swords; two of them fell wounded, and the clergyman, cocking a pistol, shot one of the mourners through the cheek, shattering his jaw-bone. Two more pistols were instantly discharged, which put the mules in such a fright that they began snorting, braying, and kicking, and then galloped off of their own accord, drag-

ging the car, the precious corpse, and Cartouche after them.

Now this was, really, what melo-dramatists call a "situation." All Cartouche could do was to hold on firmly by the car. One shot was fired at him from the mourners, and the slug made its way, as other *slugs* have done from time immemorial, into the trunk of a tree. There was much peril, and no fun, in this movement, as the mules clattered along. The way they took was very uneven, but it is proverbial that a mule is not only a sagacious, but a sure-footed beast; the coffin was securely fastened on the car, and such was the rapidity of the motion, that Cartouche had not the opportunity of jumping off—even if he had willed it so—without the certainty of broken limbs. The beasts were powerful, and had been well fed on the journey; and they continued their pace, appearing, by a sort of instinct, to make their way towards a high road, and when, after a run of an hour-and-a-half, they attained it, they moderated their

pace, and went at a sharp trot, as if they were well aware as to the point to which their steps approached.

Now the fact was, that these mules were the property of the Bishop of Agen, from whom they had been stolen about ten days before; but now, finding themselves at liberty, to a certain degree, had made up their minds to return home to their snug stalls in their master's stables of his country house.

The seigneur of the village, who had been robbed of property to a large amount at St. Sever, had called in the aid of the police authorities of Bordeaux; and a party of soldiers, under the direction of an active police officer, made a strict search through the country. On arriving at the inn, the Fleur-de-Lys, they found the man who had been left behind asleep. He was immediately arrested, as he was a known desperate character; and giving no satisfactory replies to any of the questions politely put to him, they bound him, and kept him in safe

custody until they arrived at the next town; moreover, as all judicial affairs were conducted, at that period, in a very summary way, they placed him on the rack: when, sustaining a shock or two that seemed to wake him up, and make him perfectly communicative, he soon owned as much as they desired, and discovered some strange secrets. He confessed that he was the sixth person concerned in an extensive robbery at the château of St. Sever, of money, jewels, plate, hangings, clothes, &c. The exploit had been planned some time previously, and for the safer removal of the stolen property, the car had been prepared, a coffin purchased, elegantly ornamented, and the thieves themselves disguised in the apparel of mourners that attend at funerals; that this contrivance had succeeded, as they had eluded search. The deponent needed no further racking of his invention, to tell them that he, falling asleep through weariness at the inn where the whole gang refreshed themselves, they had left him behind,

and carried away his mourner's garb, to his infinite mortification. Having this clue, the officer locked up his prisoner in the town dungeon, and then proceeded in his search.

Cartouche in the meanwhile jogged on briskly, wondering what would be the end of the adventure. The mules kept a straight-forward path: they belonged to a bishop, so it was not so much to be wondered at. To be sure, the sight of the equipage occasioned some surprise to the *roulage* drivers on the road, and also to the market-people. A bier—a coffin—and one queer mourner! Some of the merriest lookers-on said that he was attending his own madame to the grave, and chose to have all the pleasure to himself. Cartouche began to wonder when the mules would condescend to stop. At length they came in sight of a handsome but anciently built château, to which was attached a small gothic chapel. The mules snorted and made most unearthly noises, noises which were similarly repeated from the denizens of the stables

of the château; the dogs barked in the court-yard, and there was an evident sensation created therein, not only with the pigs, but with the turkeys. It communicated also to two peacocks, with their discordant notes—the birds of whom the Italians remark, that they possess "the beauty of an angel, the voice of the devil, and the guts of a thief."

On a sudden, the mules stopped at a large pair of curiously-ornamented iron gates. Cartouche communed with himself for a moment—it was the first moment that the hybrids had given him leisure to think—and he said to himself, "I have no business here;" so he slipped off the car, very glad to get rid of his *compagnons du voyage*. The mules brayed loudly—in the same spirit that the knights of romances were said to sound a large horn at the castle-gates to summon the warder. The Bishop of Agen's porter opened the *porte cocher*, and to his utter surprise beheld the mules; but, when he came to see the coffin, he crossed himself de-

voutly. The circumstance was so extraordinary that he determined, though the Bishop was at dinner with some guests—and it was a period of the day in which his reverence could not possibly be disturbed—to send in the communication to the dining-chamber. So he despatched a message to the *maitre d'hotel*, and begged to speak to him. The *maitre d'hotel* returned an answer by a lacquey, that the Bishop was so engaged on a dish which he had ordered to be prepared expressly that day, that he, the *maitre d'hotel*, avowed that it was more than his place was worth to interrupt the holy man: and this dish was a pig *à la Père Duillet;* that the worthy Père Duillet himself was at table; and that this splendid effort of the *cuisine* had been concocted by the invention, and consummated under the immediate direction, of the *père*, who was most anxiously awaiting the opinion of his ecclesiastical superior, the Bishop. The eyes of four other corpulent, smooth-skinned churchmen were all glancing in one

direction; so that, had it been in England instead of France, it positively must have been supposed a tithe-pig. The obsequious *père* was describing how this animal (which was a long one) had been dressed; divided into quarters, larded with bacon, and stewed with its liver, &c., and green parsley laid over all. It was lying soaking in wine, and the flesh being of a deadly white, it really somewhat resembled an embalmed christian. Just as his reverence the Bishop of Agen had stuck his fork into the meat, the *maitre d'hotel*, who had been out to the porter, determined at any rate to make his master acquainted with what had happened; so he said, in a low voice, "Pardon me, my lord, but the two mules, Daisy and Hannibal, which have been missing for ten days, have returned home."

"The saints be praised!" replied the Bishop, without taking his eyes from the pig. "Heaven hath returned the stolen or strayed property of the righteous."

"Yes, my lord; but they have returned harnessed to a bier!" said the *maitre d'hotel.*

"A bier?" inquired the Bishop, with an air of surprise.

"Even so, my lord; and thereon a coffin with a dead body."

The Bishop let the arm of the pale-looking pig drop plump into the gravy. Père Duillet exhibited symptoms of profound disappointment.

"This is an ill omen," mournfully remarked the Bishop.

When the diocesan had uttered this, as a matter of course, his inferiors in office all agreed "that it augured evil." There was a dead pause, during which the Bishop had taken his spectacles from his clammy forehead, and wiped the glasses with his *serviette.* The Père Duillet was fearfully fidgetty, and hinted that the stewed pig would be entirely spoiled, and would not be good, neither hot nor cold.

"Brother," said the Bishop, gravely, "this is a warning from Heaven. A corpse thus mi-

raculously brought to one's very portal, is an awful event."

Now, as the Bishop of Agen was of a very superstitious, as well as bilious nature, his stomach heaved as he glanced momentarily at the Père Duillet's pig, and he gave orders that the coffin should be conveyed into the vault underneath the chapel. Thus was the Bishop's dinner spoiled, to the infinite chagrin of his guests, who, out of courtesy and deference, imitated their superior, who could converse on nothing else but this marvellous arrival; while the churchmen, who had come prepared to partake of a splendid banquet, were compelled to try to assuage the cravings of their appetites by rolling up bread pills with their fingers, and swallowing them surreptitiously.

Meanwhile, the police agent of Bordeaux, having received a clue from the rogue in custody, of the route the mourners had taken, accompanied his soldiers to the spot where the intended division of the booty was to be made,

and where the fierce quarrel took place; there they discovered two of the robbers stretched out dead; the elder clergyman was ham-strung, and the chief mourner had half his face sliced off. They borrowed a wagon, and brought the whole party, both killed and wounded, to the town dungeon in which their comrade was lodged.

The news was soon spread of the strange arrival at the Bishop's, and the people flocked about the gates of the château and the chapel. The pious Bishop of Agen ordered a service for the dead to be performed that evening, at which the Père Duillet officiated, outwardly with very earnest gesture, but inwardly bewailing that he had been compelled to fast as well as pray; but before the conclusion of this solemn (and in more than one way *imposing*) service, the police officer arrived with his patrole. He very properly, as a good catholic, waited until the Père Duillet had quite concluded, and even joined with his voice in the choral responses, when he begged that the Bishop might be sent for, as he

had authority to open the coffin, and commence a *proces-verbal* on the nature of its contents.

If the bishop was astonished at the return of his mules and their wonderful burden, how much more was he surprised when the police officer, with some difficulty, had unscrewed the coffin, and found, therein, no body; he could not help expressing his admiration at the ingenuity of the thieves in packing up the gold, silver, jewels, family plate, tapestry, china, cabinet pictures, wearing apparel, &c., too numerous to record. The seigneur of the village of St. Sever was soon apprised of the miraculous recovery of his property.

The good Bishop of Agen, dreading to be scandalised for having ordered a solemn service of the church to be said and sung over the stolen chattels, retired for the evening; and his portly guests, not excepting the Père Duillet, having gone without their dinners, were compelled to go without their suppers. In the

Roman Catholic creed *mortification* is occasionally enjoined, and endured, when unavoidable.

But what has become of Cartouche? The sagacious young man was in a moment aware that the mules had found their way to their own home; what account could he, if asked, give of the coffin? So he slunk away from the château, keeping himself as much concealed under the wall as possible, until, turning through an avenue of apple trees, he took another road that led directly out of the village.

About a mile from the Bishop's château, dwelt the old Marchioness of Cassemacasse, a lady of large property; but, she being far advanced in years, resided with two or three female companions, who had also arrived at that period of life when good christians begin to think of their ends; in fact they were all devotees. The ancient servants of the Marchioness, who had passed their lives under her roof, were more or less tinctured with a proper piety; there was not

any hypocrisy in the establishment of the Marchioness of Cassemacasse; none of the inmates went about with the Bible in their hands, and the Alcoran in their hearts. Perhaps the worst trait that could be adduced in the whole household was in the person of a pretty *soubrette*, and she was almost the only juvenile domestic in the château (may Heaven pardon her misdoing!), who, during a very lengthened sermon in the private chapel preached by the Père Duillet (who drove an old-fashioned carriage over from Agen), converted an intense yawn into a deep sigh, with a view of letting her lover, Henri, know whereabouts she sat.

The old Marchioness had been for some time ailing, and when she could be removed from room to room, she was wheeled about in a large elbow chair. At this period one of the elderly dames who resided with her had received a letter from a relative in Spain, giving an account of a holy man, a popular preacher of Valladolid, who was esteemed such a saint that the devout went

so far as to say he performed miracles; and the old confidante proposed that this pious person should be sent for, across the frontier, as, perchance, his prayers, being of a well-assorted order, might give relief to the bodily and mental infirmities of the Marchioness. The bare mention of this notion relieved her ladyship, and she affirmed that she should not be easy until Fra Jose (the aforesaid divine) was under her roof. So an invitation was written—a very flattering offer to an humble street-preacher; and an answer was returned that Fra Jose would accept the offer, having been persuaded to do so with much difficulty. It was not the peril of travel, or the distance, but it was an apprehension that during his absence from Valladolid, the lower order of the population, by whom he had been idolized, would relapse into the wicked and fatal courses from which his energetic sermons had partially relieved them. In fact, he had addressed himself most particularly to the female sex, and having effected something like a reform

in them, as a natural result, the males underwent improvement, and it must be owned it was not before it was required by both genders. The answer went on to state that Fra Jose (as bound by his vows) would travel on foot, and that his appearance was that of a meek and lowly order of priest.

About the period that Jose's arrival had been calculated on at the château of the Marchioness of Cassemacasse, it accidentally happened, that the Bishop of Agen's mules had dropped Cartouche at his gate, when our hero thought it prudent to creep away out of the sight of men.

The old Marchioness, impatient at the non-arrival of the saint, Fra Jose, dispatched for several days together one of her female confidantes, attended by two old valets and a gardener, to meet the holy man on his road, and convey him with all due respect to the château Cassemacasse.

Cartouche had run as fast as his mourning habiliments would permit him, to get out of the

track of any pursuit, for he had been rather apprehensive since his rencontre with Monsieur Escroc; and just as Louis Dominique came, puffing and blowing up a hill, in the neighbourhood of the château, to which he was quite a stranger, he observed an old lady, in a formal veil, and dark-coloured suit, standing with three sexagenarians (the gardener and the two valets), one of whom was in *demi-toilette*, with his scanty hair unpowdered and in *papillotes*. He had in the course of years entirely spoiled his locks, either by the constant use of curling irons, or by shaking cinders over them in Ember-week.

Cartouche, finding that he was perceived, was at first at a stand still. Thought is more rapid than the wind; thought he, "they are four old imbeciles. One sneeze would blow them all over." So he advanced.

At a motion from the fan of a female devotee, which Louis Dominique at first construed into an order of "seize that scoundrel," the ancient valet with his hair in papers approached

bowing, and knelt before him, taking up the edge of his black cloak, and kissing the hem. "Ahem!" thought Cartouche, "what in Hell's name is all this?" As the valet was still on his knees, and, moreover, as he was advanced in years, Cartouche, by a natural impulse, stretched forth his hand to assist him to rise, instead of which the fist of the rascal was most reverentially saluted by the lips of the ancient with the *papillotes*. "I will pick that old ass's pocket," thought Cartouche. The elderly confidante of the Marchioness of Cassemacasse now approached, and, making a profound obeisance, said—

"Sir, we have been expecting your arrival these three days past."

Cartouche was surprised, but kept a grave countenance.

"My lady Marchioness will greet you lovingly." "The devil she will!" thought Cartouche.

The old devotee then gave the holy man the

invitation to the château, where his chamber was prepared, and remarked, that, after his long and fatiguing journey, a supper would doubtless exhilirate him.

At the words "bed and supper," Cartouche's heart almost jumped up out of his throat. It was evident to the cunning rascal that he was taken for somebody else. He required concealment and rest for the night; it could only be discovered, after all, that he was the wrong person: it was not his fault, if found out, but theirs.

His momentary reverie was interrupted by the old confidante, who said—

"Please you, sacred sir, accompany us."

So on hobbled the old lady, Cartouche, following in his dusty mourning, and, while the two aged *valets-de-chambre* brought up the rear, the old gardener stumped on sturdily before to apprise the household that the miraculous saint had arrived; the Marchioness of Cassemacasse having previously given directions

that the arrival of Fra Jose should be notified by the ringing of the chapel bell, that all her household might be assembled to receive the saintly man in due form.

CHAPTER VII.

CARTOUCHE OBTAINS PREFERMENT IN THE CHURCH, BOARD AND LODGING INCLUDED—HE BECOMES, UNINTENTIONALLY, A CONFESSOR—THE CONFESSION—THE MYSTERIOUS INFANT—CARTOUCHE FINDS EVERYTHING COMFORTABLE FOR THE PRESENT.

As the presence of the celebrated preacher had been hourly expected, a great sensation was excited in the minds of the bigoted old Marchioness and her numerous retainers, every one of whom was prepared, with a lighted wax taper in hand, to receive him. And most certainly Cartouche, albeit accustomed to strange adventures, as this narrative will sufficiently prove, was astonished with his reception; several of the maids fell on their knees before him, and entreated his blessing. It was to no purpose

that he expostulated with them: they attributed it to his more than christian urbanity. The domestics, male and female, crowded around him with their tapers, until he thought they were going to consign him to the same fate as Don Juan, in the last scene of the *Festin de la Pierre*, only they were not fiends; then there was a rush as to who should be sufficiently fortunate to touch their beads against his person, and the most zealous began to cut small pieces from his black mourning cloak as relics. Cartouche could not divine their intentions; he hardly knew whether he was bewitched, or whether he dreamed. The Marchioness of Cassemacasse was wheeled into the hall in her easy chair, and she begged that she might be permitted to kiss the hand of the blessed saint.

It was now wittily suggested that the holy man must be fatigued and hungry; and although it was a *maigre* day, and the inmates of the château were strict as regarded diet in not touching flesh, our hero was lighted into a

chamber, where a supper was plentifully laid out, with varions dishes of exquisitely cooked fish, sundry preparations of eggs in several forms, and cray-fish soup, of which a celebrated French epicure has recorded—"*Un bon coulis d'ecrévisses est le Paradis sur la terre, et digne de la table des Dieux.*" A profusion of elegant confectionary wound up the banquet of these pious persons, and be it remembered it was a *fast*-day. The mock Fra Jose was solicited to say grace, and such was the curiosity to catch the sound of his voice, and the style of prayer that he would use, that you might have heard a pin drop.

Cartouche was at a loss to recollect the Clermont College "grace before meat," so he put his hand over his face, and made some mouths as if he was praying inwardly, when, after all, the subject-matter that was passing in his mind was, "Won't I tuck into these eatables and drinkables! Oh, inwards, how you grumble! Amen."

Now all were assiduous for the honour of

filling his plate, and helping him to the daintiest bits; and all were enraptured to observe that the holy man had so excellent an appetite after his fatiguing journey. Plate after plate was cleared off. They all declared that it comforted not only their hearts, but their very souls, to witness the extreme enjoyment of Fra Jose at his repast; indeed, the old valet in the *papillotes* remarked, that for quantity, and the rapidity in consuming it, the saintly man was only exceeded by the Père Duillet himself.

When Louis Dominique had eaten as much as he could possibly contain, and drank in proportion, at which some of the most staid of the household were rather surprised, a hint was thrown out by one of the elderly ladies that Fra Jose should comfort them with a holy exhortation before they retired to rest. On being pressed on the point, Cartouche pleaded great fatigue of body and mind, and begged to depart to his chamber. Some disappointment was felt, but his wish was instantly met; for his

will amongst these devotees appeared to be law. The ancient valet was instructed to light the saintly visitor to the apartment wherein he was to sleep.

The whole company made profound obeisances to Fra Jose as he quitted the saloon, which he returned by crossing his hands on his breast, and bowing, shaking his head all the while as though he was uttering a solemn benediction.

When they arrived at the bed-chamber, the old valet, after apologising for the great liberty, ventured respectfully to inquire of Fra Jose, in the simplicity of his ignorance, whether his principles were Arian? Cartouche did not know exactly what was meant by the question, and thought it safest and easiest to reply in the negative; and his conduct on this occasion must be acknowledged as quite correct, for in religion or morals, Cartouche was a decided *Nothingarian.*

Cartouche, after reflecting on the extreme oddity of his adventure, tumbled into a better

bed than those to which he had of late been accustomed; and feeling himself secure from pursuit, and much wearied, he fell into a profound slumber, which was only interrupted by the ancient valet in the morning bringing water for his ablution. Having shaken his old mourning robes, he made himself as respectable as it was in the nature of the person to accomplish, although he could not help again reflecting, as he surveyed his face in a glass, that he was rather a "gallows" looking clergyman: but he found it necessary to keep up the farce as long as it should prove convenient. As he passed quickly across the corridor, he felt something touch his sleeve slightly. He started round; for at that moment his mind was deeply engaged in planning a highly ingenious mode of robbing the château prior to proceeding on his journey. Now, although Louis Dominique was decidedly hardened by vice, yet a touch on the shoulder always brought with it certain sensations perfectly unknown to a strictly honest man. Car-

touche's momentary fears were dispelled by the joyous voice of Jeannette, the pretty *soubrette* we have already mentioned.

"Father," she said, "have the goodness to follow me. Madame de Poquefouville wishes to see you in the chapel."

"And who is Madame de Poquefouville?" asked Cartouche.

"She is the principal companion of the Marchioness of Cassemacasse," replied Jeannette, "and high in her ladyship's confidence."

Louis Dominique could do no less than follow the *soubrette* to the door of the chapel, on entering which Jeannette quitted him. The eye of Cartouche, with an instinct natural to his profession, turned towards the altar. What a massive service of silver plate—how elaborately chased—how beautifully formed! What superb antique lofty candlesticks! His heart beat quickly, his whole frame became agitated. He approached the objects of his adoration with seeming reverence, and being completely lost in

the contemplation of the surpassing beauty of the plate, he was just in the act of slipping a magnificent cup into his sleeve, when the sound of a deep sigh caused him to turn, and he perceived Madame de Poquefouville on her knees before a figure of the Virgin; this awoke Cartouche to a sense of his peculiar situation, though he was puzzled as to the means by which the humble penitent had contrived to kneel down. A sacque and petticoat of the stiffest paduasoy, hooped with cane and whalebone, enveloped her withered person, and gave it a would-be air of natural rotundity, which her shrivelled and sallow features instantly belied.

On beholding the supposed Fra Jose, Madame de Poquefouville said, with infinite humility, "Holy father, in me you see a penitent lamb, appertaining to this worldly fold of wickedness and vanity."

Cartouche asked the old lady to communicate her wishes to him; and Madame de Poquefouville, pointing to a confessional box, requested

him to enter it, that she might receive his ghostly advice after confessing her. Now, Cartouche thought that this was paying rather dearly for his supper and bed, but as he remembered that advice costs nothing—so it is more frequently liberally given than gratefully received—he decided that he had better consent with a good grace.

"Proceed, *daughter*," said he to the lady, who was old enough to be his grandmother.

After some preparatory coughing, for the fair penitent was rather asthmatic, she said, "Holy Fra Jose, it is I who have been the cause of your journey hither; hearing of your wondrous fame in Spain, from some of my female relatives, I induced the noble Marchioness, who is as rich as she is deaf, to send for you; when in reality my chief object has been to be absolved by so saintly a father of the church. My conscience compels me to confess to you a sin I committed in the hey-day of youth, fifteen years ago."

"The hey-day of youth, fifteen years ago?"

interrupted Cartouche, gravely. "Think again, daughter, and conceal nothing from me."

"My memory has not been good of late," answered Madame de Poquefouville; "it may be twenty-five, or thirty-five years ago."

"Almost long enough to have forgotten all about it," observed Fra Jose; "henceforth, be more particular as to dates."

"Alas! holy father," continued Madame de Poquefouville, "I doubt not but I must mortify myself to the utmost; but to expiate my crime in part, let me first confess it."

Cartouche, who was beginning to be rather impatient, said, "Come, old lady, get on, for God's sake."

The penitent thought her confessor rather *brusque* in his manner, but set it down to the cause that Fra Jose had habitually gained this rough mode by constantly having to listen to the confessions of the lower order of people, who naturally must have some very gross communications to make.

"Deprived of the care of my mother in infancy," proceeded the old lady, "I was educated in a convent."

"Stay," said Fra Jose, "I must be made aware how you lost your mother?"

"To my grief be it spoken," replied the penitent, "she eloped with a captain of the Mousquetaires."

Fra Jose uttered an ominous "Humph!" which seemed to imply, "Like goose, like gosling!"

"The convent of St. André was situated near the Spanish frontier, I was immured there for several years, but on the evening of my fifteenth birth-day—a day which had been celebrated as a *fête* amongst the boarders—I retired to my chamber, the grated window of which overlooked a charming extent of country, when suddenly I heard a deep, rich, manly voice beneath the casement, singing a wild yet beautiful melody, and accompanied by a mandoline. The words of the singer equalled the melody in

passionate expression. They were so pathetic that Monsieur Le Sage has introduced them into his new novel, *Le Diable Boiteux;* they ranthus—

> "I burn and weep incessantly,
> Without my tears ever quenching my flames,
> Or my flames drying up my tears!"

and I owned I listened to the strange minstrel for three hours, during which time he did not vary his ditty."

"You must have been damnedly in love!" said the confessor.

"I own it," meekly replied the communicant. "He came night after night, and I at last ventured to speak to him."

"What didst thou say?" asked Fra Jose.

"Alas!" answered the old lady, "they were the words of worldly vanity, and to repeat them to your righteous ears were a sacrilege. However, I told the handsome stranger, that in three days I was going home to my father's château, where I should be more at liberty, and

begged of him to be polite enough to come and serenade me there. He most respectfully inquired where my father's residence was situated. I acquainted him that it was called the Château Hénault, situated in the neighbourhood of Tartas. My unknown admirer came to see me at my good, unsuspecting papa's house. He stated himself to be an exiled nobleman, by birth an Italian, but of mixed parentage, for his father was a Swiss, and his mother a German."

"It does not matter a fig who or what his father or mother were; but do push on," replied Cartouche, wanting his breakfast.

"His person, manners, and address so supported this statement, that I entirely confided in its truth. He assured me, with vows to the Virgin, that although his patrimonial estates were confiscated, he was well provided with money. In fine, holy father, I consented to elope with him on the following night! Consider my youth and inexperience!"

"I consider nothing but your damnable sin," muttered Fra Jose. "Of all the cats I have ever met, you are the worst."

The penitent winced and wept at being called "cat," but owned sincerely that she deserved it. After she had partially recovered herself, she continued—"My lover, whose name was Giulio Mordecai—"

"Stay!" said Cartouche, "that is not an Italian name; it sounds to me rather Jewish."

"Whatever the dear man might have been, he was born in Italy; and as for his persuasion—"

"Ah!" exclaimed Fra Jose, "it was his *persuasion* that led you to sin."

"Too true!" said Madame de Poquefouville. "Poor Giulio Mordecai hinted to me the necessity of taking with us some *rouleaux*, or plate, or jewels—"

"Ay, ay, a sensible dog," said Cartouche.

"And I grieve to say," continued the penitent, "that as I knew where my father's treasure was deposited, I had only to obtain possession

of the key of the iron casket to meet the wishes of my inamorato."

"'Pon my life!" said the supposed Fra Jose, "you were a devilish deal cleverer than I should have taken you to be, from your present looks." Here the eyes of Cartouche glistened, and his mouth watered so that he was obliged to wipe it on the sleeve of his mourning cassock. The poor trembling communicant, although astonished at the language of the severe street-preacher, thought she felt his warm tears of compassion fall on her outstretched skinny hands. Of course she had a few simultaneous drops. Women have very tender hearts.

Madame de Poquefouville then proceeded in her confession: "Oh, holy sir, I fled with my husband across the Spanish frontier. Fatigued, we took refuge in a *venta*, where Signor Giulio Mordecai appeared to be well known and much respected."

"Oh! of course," said Fra Jose, with impatience.

"We passed three days in mutual affection."

"I have no doubt of it," remarked the confessor; "but do get on, there's a good lady."

"Our situation would have been most delightful, but for the intense smell of tobacco which proceeded from a trap-door opening from our sitting apartment into a cellar under ground. If it had not been for this, I should have been perfectly charmed with the rustic air of simplicity pervading the whole place. To be sure, the little inn could only supply us with eggs and onions—no bread—but what of that? We existed on love. But my dream of happiness received a sudden shock, for one night I perceived my beloved husband, Giulio Mordecai, to descend into this subterranean place, accompanied by Senora Garcias, our landlady; and, naturally enough, curious to know what the object of their visit could possibly be, I cautiously raised the trap-door, and, applying my eyes to the opening, imagine my feelings when I discovered the landlady with an infant child in her

arms, in long swaddling clothes; Senora Garcias appeared to be tying on its little cap, and having enveloped it in a large mantle, gave it to my husband, who caressed it with smiles. Oh! holy father, imagine the unpleasant thoughts that entered my head when I heard Giulio say, 'My own dear child! By St. Anthony! Garcias, thou hast dressed it better than ever; and how it has grown, too, though I am afraid we shall never be able to get it much larger. Ha! ha! ha! we must stuff it well with tobacco, and shall make a better profit than ever.' I own I was perfectly astonished at the idea of stuffing an infant with tobacco; and not less so than at my husband approaching, followed by Senora Garcias, bearing the infant with its face muffled up. 'My love!' said Giulio Mordecai, in one of his blandest tones, 'light of my soul! I have a favour to ask of you which I am sure is granted before it is named. It is necessary that this little child, who, I need scarcely add, is particularly dear to me, should be conveyed to

Oleron, and we must start to-night; and I know not to whom to trust it but yourself. There are two sure-footed mules at the door, with an intelligent boy, who will serve as a guide. If you will favour me by taking the infant yourself, you will everlastingly oblige me?' 'But will you not accompany me?' said I. 'Charmer of my existence! no,' replied Mordecai; 'it might endanger my liberty, nay more, my life.' 'But why this mystery to your newly-married wife?' I inquired very naturally; 'whose infant is this?' 'You shall know all on your return, beloved idol of my heart.' I reluctantly consented, and my husband assisted me on the mule. The boy mounted the other, and Mordecai placed the child on my lap. I was struck by its extreme weight; it laid like a mass of metal, neither moving nor uttering a plaint of any kind. I longed to have a peep at its face, but I reflected that if I chanced to disturb it, I might be tormented by its outcries during the whole journey, so I contented myself

by singing a soothing lullaby wherever the roads were rough, and I do not remember a level bit during the whole route. The boy knew to whom and where this mysterious child was to be delivered, but to all my inquiries he preserved a dogged silence. After we had travelled until daylight—and I was horribly fatigued with the weight of the infant, which I was utterly surprised to discover had no calls of nature—we suddenly encountered five or six horsemen. 'Halt!' cried the leader, when they were within a dozen yards of us; 'here is the child we seek,' and he approached me. 'And I am sure,' I replied, 'that you are exceedingly welcome to the dear infant; I give you my word that it is as quiet a child as ever lived.' The soldier smiled grimly, and, to my utter horror, ran the point of his sword as far it would go into the infant's body! I dropped it in speechless agony; in an instant the clothes were torn off, and a tin case appeared to my view, crammed full of tobacco, which one and all rifled in the best

possible humour. I was conveyed, sorely against my will, to Oleron, where I was taken before the authorities as a smuggler, when, dreading the results, I thought it best to confess my egregious folly, and discover all I knew of the dear perfidious Giulio Mordecai, who I now learned was a notorious *contrabandista*, and who had by his ingenuity contrived for years to elude all custom-house officers, and introduce large quantities of smuggled tobacco into France across the Spanish frontier."

Fra Jose laughed, and thought that he had never known a better expedient for getting rid of a wife, especially when he heard Madame de Poquefouville say, "Not an atom of the plate, not one solitary coin of all the treasure I confided to my husband, did I ever see again. My justly-incensed father refused to receive me beneath his roof, aud after a lengthened sojourn in a penitential religious house, I was induced to accept the situation in which you now find me. My patroness is rich and bountiful, and I

shall remain with her for the remainder of my days." (Here the fair penitent took a pinch of snuff.)

Cartouche, whose patience was exhausted by this long-winded confession, told the old lady that he should turn over in his mind the penance he intended to enjoin. He then, quitting the chapel, to his infinite satisfaction, was summoned to the morning repast. He was, at that moment, holding to his judgment a pair of scales delicately balanced; one side was filled with all the charms of good eating and drinking, a comfortable couch, and present security; in the opposite scale was the abominable trouble of shriving three ugly old women, the irksomeness of having to keep up the sacerdotal character of Fra Jose, while it cost Louis Dominique incalculable pains to conceal a variety of vicious propensities which would hourly become more and more apparent, and, added to this, the love of a free and roving life. But at the very instant that the heavy-tongued bell of the château summoned the appetite to arms, Cartouche felt

his soul gently incline towards the first-mentioned scale, and he combated the desires of a naturally craving stomach no longer. Louis Dominique proceeded to the hall, in which the breakfast was to be served, with a certain juvenile and high-spirited elasticity of step which accorded ill with the countenance of the supposed Fra Jose, drawn up as it was with a sedate and highly mortified appearance. The corners of his mouth were turned down, aud his eyes being *cast up* made a great *addition.* His nostrils were drawn in, his lips were compressed, and his hands (nervously twitching all the while at the sight of various tempting objects of value and *vêrtu* in the apartment) were folded meekly and humbly upon his bosom.

The Marchioness of Cassemacasse had with difficulty risen from her chair, for the purpose of receiving, with due form, the reverend father. She was upwards of seventy years of age, and a vast quantity of superfluous flesh had been accumulating around her bones in all directions

for half a century. To Cartouche she appeared as if a feather-bed had suddenly encircled his *hreat* grandmother (if his pedigree could boast of such an ancestress), and carried her off in spite of her inclinations. The Marchioness was most profoundly deaf, yet, as is very often the case with persons similarly afflicted, if her companions happened to remark to each other, "That their poor, dear, kind, mistress was unusually fidgetty and petulant," a blighting frown, or a thrust with her ear-trumpet (the only musical instrument on which the Marchioness now performed), hinted to Madame de Poquefouville or the other ladies, that a little more caution was necessary in their conversation.

To the eyes of Louis Dominique by far the most delightful object in the apartment was the table spread with all the goodly characteristics of a French breakfast. There were cold roasted capons reposing on beds of water-cresses, and white soup and oysters, and eggs cooked in eight different ways, plenty of excellent Bor-

deaux wine, and coffee and chocolate served up in costly Sèvres china.

Madame de Poquefouville evinced the utmost solicitude to assist the holy father to the delicacies, and it must be owned that Cartouche did ample justice to her kindness; the capon vanished as if by magic, and *pláts* of eggs were drowned in claret, like Pharaoh's host in the Red Sea.

The Marchioness made some ineffectual attempts to introduce pious conversation, but Louis Dominique was too seriously engaged to collect his thoughts sufficiently to reply to her ladyship's remarks.

Madame de Poquefouville then ventured a trifling observation on *maigre* days and *flesh* days, and vowed that her pillow was infinitely smoother after the former than after the latter; and she begged to ascertain the holy father's opinion on this subject. Cartouche, who was at this moment forking down large oysters, replied, after some due consideration, "That he highly

approved of their sentiments *(exit an oyster)*; that there were good catholics who could not be brought to consider *(exit another oyster)* five *maigre* days a week, in a necessary light. *(Exit an oyster.)* These people were troubled with such gross appetites, and the craving of always having something in their mouths. *(Another oyster bolted.)* He once knew a lady of rank, who, on the approach of the Holy Week, said to her friend, 'We must mortify ourselves a *little*.' 'Well, Madame la Comtesse,' replied the other, 'let us make our servants *fast*.'" Here was heard a groan of surprise from the domestics waiting at table, and Cartouche swallowed four more oysters. "No one knows how *I* have fasted," added the false Fra Jose; "thrice have my bones been through my skin!"

The Marchioness observing a general look of commiseration, and not hearing the remarks of the holy man, laid her trumpet in despair on the table, and inquired eagerly the subject of his discourse. Louis Dominiqne, somewhat

elated, forgot in a trifling degree his priestly character, and lifting the ear-trumpet up to his mouth, he bawled through it like a ship-pilot—"Thrice have my bones been through my skin!" Madame de Poquefouville and the attendants were astonished.

The poor old Marchioness stared, and almost expected that it was the last trump; but presently observed how extremely edifying would a sermon be, preached by such a saintly person as Fra Jose, and concluded by politely entreating Cartouche to give them a little ghostly advice in the chapel; or, as her ladyship expressed it, to show them the light of his countenance.

To this, as he was situated, Louis Dominique could only reply by a meek bow.

The ladies surrounding Fra Jose, the domestics formed in procession, and all wended their way to the château-chapel, our hero inwardly reflecting, like the peasant at the puppet-show, "What the deuce is coming next?"

CHAPTER VIII.

CARTOUCHE IS SEDUCED INTO PREACHING A SERMON, WHICH IS DISAGREEABLY INTERRUPTED—HE RELINQUISHES HIS MINISTRY AFTER PROVIDING THE SUPPLIES—HE IS INITIATED INTO THE SCIENCE OF FALCONRY—VISITS A NOBLEMAN AND TURNS DIAMOND MERCHANT.

Louis Dominique Cartouche, finding himself so wonderfully respected, and surrounded by such a community of old fools, at once resolved, before he robbed the château and made his escape, to endeavour to meet the wishes of the inmates, that he should address them from the pulpit.

The pupil of the Jesuits, with his versatility, did not greatly dread the task? and he was of that class of preachers who would impress on his

his congregation "Do what I *say*, not what I *do*." So he boldly ascended the stairs, without at the moment determining on the subject of his discourse. The whole of the inmates of the château assembled with eager curiosity. The Marchioness de Cassemacasse had elevated her trumpet to the drum of her ear, and the penitent De Poquefouville listened with devout attention.

Cartouche hemmed to clear his voice; he had thought rapidly within himself, "The more *outré* I give it, the better they will be pleased." He commenced (after the accustomed genuflexions, &c.)—

"Pious sisters and brethren—the subject upon which I am about to dilate must at once strike the truth of it to your inmost hearts; I am not going (like other pastors) to trouble you on the head of purgatory, which I look upon to be the *correctional police* of the other world; nor am I one who would insist that you should individually torment yourselves in this world, in order

that you may be saved in the next. My views on all these points are fair and open." ("What the devil shall I say next?" thought Cartouche, as he paused, and wiped his mouth with the back of his hand.) His eye fortunately caught a view of a painting, on which was rather barbarously depictured a figure of St. Denys, with his head under his arm.

"Pious sisters and brethren, we are fully aware that Saint Denys, after having been decollated, walked five miles out of the city of Paris to found an abbey, carrying his head under his arm; he rested seven times, at seven equal distances, to shift his head from one arm to the other, and to bless and console his wondering admirers and followers. The only point wherein I do *not* resemble Saint Denys is, that my head is on my shoulders."

At this moment a stranger, in a plain dark sacerdotal habit, who had been seated in a gloomy part of the chapel, gravely inquired of the *soubrette*, Jeannette, the name of the person in the pulpit.

"The celebrated Fra Jose, sir," was the innocent reply.

"Indeed!" said the stranger, with evident surprise.

Cartouche thought it was now time to make an impression on his audience by attacking them, not *en masse*, but at their individual sins. So he, with the utmost impudence, continued, "My sisters and brethren, I hereby give you notice that, to avoid confusion, I shall classify your sins. I shall confess all the liars on Monday!" Here the congregation looked strangely at each other.

"I shall confess all the covetous people on Tuesday!" Here the young folks glanced at their more elderly companions.

"I shall confess all the slanderers on Wednesday! All the thieves on Thursday! All the libertines on Friday!" Here the *femmes de chambre* exchanged looks with the pages.

"And all the bad-women on Saturday!" Madame de Poquefouville sighed like a furnace.

The stranger in the dark habit now stood up erect, with a pair of intensely black Spanish eyes, which flashed, most indignantly, all over the chapel. Cartouche did not let this escape him, he instantly perceived that this was the person for whom he had been taken; he puzzled himself momentarily as to the means of extricating his person from this new scrape, when, to his additional mortification, he observed burly Monsieur Sebastien Escroc enter the chapel, cross himself, and mutter something into his hat, shaking his head. On perceiving that worthy officer, Cartouche placed his palm on his forehead to disguise his features, and exclaimed, "Oh! my brethren, there is one most wicked now standing up among us."

Upon this, Louis Dominique scuttled down the stairs of the pulpit, and walked towards the altar, when, perceiving a side door, he bolted through it, and vanished from the congregation. This was the portal of the apartment wherein the chapel vestments were changed; and thus suspicion was eluded.

Monsieur Escroc, hearing what the preacher said, eyed the stranger narrowly; and approaching him, said, "I arrest you in the name of the Criminal Court of Bayonne!"

It was in vain that Fra Jose (who, for a holy man, lost his temper too quickly) expostulated. All the chapel was in a state of disturbance; many were vexed that the excellent sermon that had been just commenced, and which was likely to prove of very high interest, should be so abruptly terminated. Fra Jose gesticulated, ejaculated, and fulminated, with all the natural energy of a person who had been accustomed to hold forth to a street mob; and, while this was going on, Cartouche, seeing a livery coat and hat of one of the Marchioness's pages hanging on a peg, threw off his dingy cassack into the bottom of a closet, instantly attired himself in a new disguise, and rushed through several apartments of the château, laying his hands on every portable article; amongst the rest, a small casket which was on a marble table in the Marchioness

of Cassemacasse's boudoir. He made his way through the window into the extensive pleasure grounds, and walked leisurely in the direction from the house. Being dressed in the livery worn by the lacqueys of the château, he felt tolerably certain that he should not be discovered; but he looked about anxiously for a scalable portion of the high wall that surrounded the gardens. Presently his quick eye beheld a point at which he could climb, where, making his way over, and leaping a moat, with all his weight about him, and with the dexterity of a squirrel, he pushed into the forest, and fortunately got upon a beaten track, which he pursued till nightfall.

In the meantime, Monsieur Sebastien Escroc had brought his reverend prisoner into the servants' hall of the château, where he gravely commenced a *procés verbal*, occupying three hours; while, with the utmost arrogance and self-conceit, he would not listen to any attempt on the part of Fra Jose to justify himself. It must also be

related that the dialect of the worthy pastor was in a provincial Spanish French, which was not always comprehended by the erudite officer of police.

The night was not very dark when Louis Dominique discerned at a distance some lights, which proceeded from windows, as he suspected, of the town of Roquefort, where he determined to pass the hours until morning. He knocked up the chamberlain of an inn, and procured bread, wine, and a bed. No sooner did day break than Cartouche also broke open the casket he had brought from the Cassemacasse boudoir.

Lo! now his rascally eyes were greeted with several *rouleaux* of gold pieces of former reigns that had been carefully hoarded up; for what purpose? to fall into the clutch of a confirmed and hardened robber. In the casket also was a massive ring, set with a large diamond, and surrounded by a circle of smaller brilliants of first water. A change of dress was again necessary, so a *marchand fripeur* was sent for, who,

being informed of the articles required by Cartouche, quickly supplied him with linen, a buff coat trimmed with lace, flapped vest, a belt round his girdle, and high boots; a feathered hat completed the costume, which made a tolerable appearance, although the clothing was but second-hand. Paying liberally for these, without attempting any abatement of price, Cartouche dismissed the *fripeur*, and made inquiry as to where he might purchase a good nag: when the proprietor of the inn where he lodged, had, fortunately (as usual), a horse to dispose of, which, of course, he was very sorry to part with, on account of its various excellent qualities. The caparisons were also to be sold.

Louis Dominique became an immediate purchaser, and securing his effects in a small *valise*, he mounted, to try his Bucephalus.

"By Saint Louis," exclaimed the landlord, "Monsieur sits with the same grace in his saddle as the Marquis de Groc?"

"Aye, indeed," replied Cartouche, curveting

as if on a rocking-horse ; "and who may be the Marquis de Groc ?"

"You must be a stranger, indeed," said the vintner, "not to be acquainted with the Marquis. Why, he is a nobleman of extensive property in these parts, and, were it not treasonable, we look up to him as a king. He is the greatest and most hospitable man in the Landes, and keeps open house."

This was enough for the fertile genius of Cartouche, who cheerfully paid for his steed, raised his feathered hat gracefully, and turned the nose of the charger in the direction to which the landlord pointed. He now in joyous spirits tried the mettle of the animal, and, bating that he was touched in the wind, so that his trotting pace had a running roaring accompaniment, Cartouche did not repent of his bargain. After three hours' riding, Cartouche heard a cheerful whooping, and presently he beheld a lordly heron in the air, and a hawk cleaving the breeze, ascending by a succession of small circles, each

going higher and higher, like the steps of a winding corkscrew staircase. At times, both the pursuer and pursued would fly so high as almost to be lost in the clouds. When the hawk reached a proper elevation above the heron she shot down upon it with all her force and velocity, and having firmly grappled it, they tumbled from the sky together, and dropped close to the feet of Cartouche's horse. Cartouche instantly dismounted, and placing the heel of his heavy boot on the wing of the heron, assisted the falcon in her struggle with her prey.

At this moment, a well-dressed young gentleman in falconer's attire rode up, followed by several attendants; he held in his hand a tasseled hood, and was well mounted. One of the sportsmen broke the heron's legs, and Cartouche handed the hawk to the young gentleman, who thanked him with much courtesy.

"I was correct," he exclaimed. "Practice only can make us perfect in falconry science. La Fleur proposed '*far jettée.*' I said 'No,

jettée serré must be adopted.' I let my hawk fly as soon as possible after the game had taken wing. I calculated the species of the quarry, the peculiar quality of my falcon on hand: I know the nature of the country, and observed the force and direction of the wind. *Voila la fin!*"

Cartouche having uttered some artful complimentary remarks, received a hearty invitation to join their party, on accepting which he soon discovered that the young gentleman was the Count Duchatelet, eldest son to the Marquis de Groc; and before Louis Dominique had ridden half an hour by his side he contrived to impress the Count with a most favourable opinion of his talents and character. The young nobleman, with some ostentation, dwelt on the extent of his father's possessions; his acres of forest; his numerous mules, sheep, serfs, and villages; the beauty and high alliances of his sisters; and, as a climax (by far the most interesting one to his new friend), his mother's jewels! The mouth of

Cartouche watered. He resolved to pay immediate and unremitting court to his new patron, for so he resolved to have the honour to make him, for his own particular purposes.

The day's sport being over, the Count Duchatelet told Cartouche that his father, after the good ancient fashion, kept open house, and that he would be welcomed as a stranger to bed and board. This was exactly what Louis Dominique wanted, for in this magnificent château he would be, as long so he chose to stay, quite safe from the results of his pranks at the Marchioness de Cassemacasse's.

Behold now our imperturbable ruffian seated at supper between the noble host and his incautious son, and surrounded by their guests; for not satisfied to remain unnoticed among the promiscuous herd assembled round the ample hearth, there was a something in his mien (being now well clothed), a self-possession not unmixed with courtesy, which gave him an immediate title to the good graces of the hospitable Marquis.

When the supper was over, and the Marquis de Groc had retired to his private apartments for the night, the Count, excited by his field sports, drank more wine than was his custom. Cartouche listened to all the young gentleman's digressions on falconry, until he himself almost became qualified to practise as a "*licensed hawker!*" More wine was ordered (and oh what wine! in that country!), when Cartouche adverted to the subject of diamonds, of which, indeed, he had derived some little knowledge, in his sojourn with Madame Rebeeca Mezzia, who was well aware in what quarters the most valuable were deposited.

Cartouche remarked that he was a diamond dealer—not a mere jeweller; but diamonds were the sole commodity in which he trafficked. The young Count again eugolised the family jewels of the house of De Groc. Cartouche stated that he had seen those of the Duchess de Vantadour; in fact, that one, formerly the property of the Duchess, was now in his possession, and he

took from his inner pocket the diamond ring he had stolen from the Marchioness de Cassemacasse. The young Count admired its sparkling beauty, but Cartouche expressed some incredulity as to any diamonds being in that department of France that could equal his gems on the ring; "Indeed," he added, "you could only meet one like it in the nose of the Shah of Delhi, or on the *os frontis* of the Queen of Portugal!"

The Count Duchatelet was a *young* man; in disposition without guile, but inordinately proud of the family possessions. He was of course extremely piqued at so withering a remark; and, under the influence of an unusual quantity of the most delicious old Bordeaux, took an immediate opportunity of giving Cartouche ocular demonstration, in proof of what he had asserted, in regard to the De Groc diamond.

Cartouche begged that he would on no account trouble himself, that he was perfectly satisfied, and took the liberty to refill his friend's wine glass, as well as his own.

But the Count Duchatelet insisted, and invited Louis Dominique to follow him. Taking a half burnt out taper in his hand, he proceeded along certain corridors, on the walls of which hung family portraits of the De Grocs, from the days of Charlemagne, in every conceivable variety of costume. Of course Cartouche begged, as a profound favour, to inspect the pictures, and inquired, in the most interested manner, the history of every one of them. Upon the subject of his ancestors the young Count was eloquent. The junior scion of the house had as yet only made himself eminent in his superior knowledge of falconry, but now his pride called his deceased and illustrious relatives from the tomb that he might identify himself with them.

Cartouche's only point was to get as much of the wax-candle burned as possible.

"You shall see our diamonds," said the Count; and approaching the end of a corridor, a strong iron studded door presented itself. Duchatelet

touched a secret spring, the portal opened, and, ascending the steps of a turret, Cartouche found himself in an antique but richly-furnished boudoir. An Indian cabinet, which met his view on entering, was the receptacle of the De Groc treasures, which were, in truth, of extraordinary beauty. One eye of Cartouche gloated on them, while the other was *wicked*ly fixed on the expiring taper.

Cartouche exclaimed, "Splendid! superb! magnificent! I give up my point!" and here the candle flickered.

"What is the matter with the light," said the Count, and he momentarily turned to remedy the defect; but, alas! in that brief moment, the practised hand of Cartouche found no difficulty in abstracting two of the most valuable gems in the cabinet.

"Let us get down stairs before the light goes out," demurely remarked Cartouche.

"Good," replied the young Count. "How silly it was in me not to have been provided with a better light."

"Oh, it has answered the purpose uncommonly well," said Cartouche; "pray close the cabinet, and let us descend."

Under these circumstances speedy detection was not likely to follow. Wishing his noble young host good night, and expressing his profound obligations for the hospitality he had received, and the high honour that had been conferred on so humble an individual as himself, in forming the acquaintance of such an ancient and renowned family, he kissed the Count Duchatelet's hand, and retired to the chamber destined for his repose. And yet this monstrous villain *did* sleep.

Cartouche thought it prudent to be an early riser on the following morning; and in that kind of noble hostelry found no impediment in the way of departing on horseback as he came.

He now turned affairs over in his mind. He had committed two important robberies which would most assuredly create a sensation. A pursuit must naturally be made after him. Crossing

the country, and reaching Langon, he put up his horse at a small *cabaret*, giving strict directions that it should be well fed until he returned for it.

He then passed the river Garonne in a ferry boat to St. Macaire, where he made a substantial breakfast; and jumping on board a *gabare*, went rapidly down the tide to Bordeaux.

Arrived at the fine old city, and putting up at an inn in the neighbourhood of the ancient feudal edifice, the Château Trompette, which had recently been strengthened with new works by Vauban, by order of Louis XIV.; Cartouche conceived it to be advisable to assume an extreme plainness of dress, and the quiet abstract air of a person engaged in mercantile pursuits. He soon found his way to the Rue de l'Intendance, where the principal tradesmen had their shops and residences, and which was a kind of Rialto for merchants in general. The quick eye of Cartouche was caught as he entered the locality by a sign-board inscribed with

GARIGUES.
JOUALIER A LA
REINE D'ESPAGNE.

On entering the shop, Louis Dominique was received with abundant civility by a fat good-tempered Gascon tradesman, in full peruke, on which the flies were crawling up one side and down the other, attracted by the pomatum with which the said peruke was inter*larded*.

Cartouche's own manner was rather reserved than otherwise as he glanced at the articles displayed in the shop; he made a purchase of one or two of them to the amount of ten Louis. This appeared to loosen, still more, the usually voluble tongue of Monsieur Garigues, who stated that he was preparing an *ecrin* of marvellous beauty (*"absolument ravigottant!"*) for her Majesty the Queen of Spain, but that he wanted a diamond of a certain size to complete it.

Madame Garigues, who had been seated at a further corner of the shop, presently approached. At the period of which we are writing up to the

present time, the wife of the French tradesman is always part of the stock in the business, particularly if she should happen to be handsome; Madame Garigues had been pretty, but her face was destroyed by affectation. She had good eyes, a good mouth, and good hands; but she valued herself on her eyes, and ogled, cast such languishing looks, and darted such glances, that it was almost unendurable; then her lips were ever tucked up—she grinned eternally; to exhibit her well-formed hands, she was constantly beating time to all she said, arranging her dress, taking her rings off, putting them on again, and playing with her fingers.

Cartouche paid profound attention to Madame Garigues, and gazed at her with extreme admiration. Presently he declared himself to be a foreign diamond merchant, but regretted that he had only two diamonds by him at that time of any value (excepting, indeed, an indifferent good one in a ring), but that he was afraid neither of them would suit Monsieur Garigues.

The larger of the two gems, which had been set in an old-fashioned agraffe, was produced. The Gascon put on his spectacles, and declared it to be all that he wished, and began to inquire about the price. At this moment the beautiful hand of Madame Garigues touched that of Louis Dominique as if by accident, and she then looked at him with her large stag eyes as if she would have pierced him through; then she smilingly exhibited her whole range of teeth, and apologised in the sweetest tone, and with the most innocent confusion imaginable.

This gave time for Cartouche to make a demand, and he boldly said he required 5,000 crowns for his diamond. The Gascon cried alas! that he could not at that time raise that amount, although he admitted the jewel to be worth the money.

Cartouche, assuming an air of munificence, said, "Hark ye, Monsieur Garigues, you and your charming Madame have lived in great repute here at Bordeaux for a number of years;

you are a tradesman of honourable principles ; on the score of the crowns you need not trouble yourself; you can pay me half the amount, and the remainder whenever it is convenient."

The eyes of the lady again flashed triumphantly, as much as to indicate, "*I* have effected this."

The Gascon was enchanted with the conduct of Louis Dominique, and paid him over 2,500 crowns.

After a slight whisper with Madame, who glanced a vivid assent, Garigues said, "Monsieur, to-morrow is the anniversary day of our patron saint, St. Paulinus of Nola ; my wife and myself, make a holiday on that afternoon, and visit our *proprieté* (a vineyard) at Montesquieu. Will you favour us with your company to a slight dinner, and a friendly glass of good wine?"

Cartouche affected to ponder as to whether he had a prior engagement ; but when he saw the honest Gascon deposit the jewels of the Queen of Spain with much care into an iron-safe, the

key of which he carried tied to a riband around his neck, he accepted the proffered invitation with great satisfaction.

It was arranged that Louis Dominique was to call on Monsieur Garigues at noon on the following day, and that he would drive his guest down in his cabriolet to their cottage retreat at Montesquieu.

After Cartouche had departed, the Gascon said that in his life he had never met with a more liberal dealer; that the diamond he had that morning purchased was worth at least 8,000 crowns, and that he should charge her Majesty of Spain 10,000 for it when set in the *ecrin*.

"Aye, my dear friend," replied his wife, "you little know how much of your good fortune you owe to me: *I* dazzled him, *I* fascinated him. Some people are capable of *looking* diamonds—can display natural pearls. When you married me, my dear, you wedded yourself to a treasure."

Garigues being much accustomed to his wife's

arguments on such matters, was always of the same opinion with her, as it saved much useful time that might otherwise be lost in speaking the homely truth, and moreover it avoided an abundance of contradiction.

At the appointed hour, Cartouche was with his new acquaintances ; and the cabriolet—a species of carriage that has since undergone considerable improvement—was at the door. This cabriolet seemed to be designed for the north pole, since there was no *spring* to it ; it stood a great height from the ground, and had, like its owner, an enormous leather head. A female servant of Monsieur Garigues was strapping a basket behind, containing the eatables and wine for their country repast. In the shafts was harnessed a large roan horse, with light blue eyes, and a white mane and tail. The cabriolet was so high that Madame Garigues found herself under the necessity of first mounting on a chair, brought from the shop, to get on the step of the carriage. Cartouche handed Madame with an

air of gallantry; and a brisk breeze down the street exhibited a new point of attraction, in the lady's possession of a handsome leg. Cartouche was the next to ascend the tall cabriolet, and lastly, whip in hand, the fat Gascon wedged himself in, and the whole party were neatly dove-tailed.

A chuck with the reins set the blue eyed horse in motion, and off he trotted, whisking the flies with his ample tail. At that happy period (for horses) meddling man had not cruelly deprived the animal of his natural weapon, given benevolently by the Creator for chasing away stinging insects.

Monsieur Garigues weighed several pounds more than might be guessed at a mere venture, Cartouche was apprehensive that the cabriolet would not convey the trio (with a rattling accompaniment) either with safety or with expedition on their journey; but he was mistaken in the vehicle, which, though the jolting was intolerable, was so built as to defy extra weight;

and the load of live lumber was adjusted with great nicety.

Although we shall not attempt a minute description of the manner in which the party passed the day, yet, under several brief heads, our readers shall be put in possession of the particulars :—

THE PROPRIETÉ OF MONSIEUR GARIGUES.

Villa small, better calculated for summer than winter, as the windows, like most French casements, let in a considerable quantity of wholesome fresh air. The once gay paper-hangings had sustained some injury by the damp ; subject mythological, Actæon and Diana. The chaste Diana exceedingly *mothery* ; the skins of most of the hounds had peeled off, and the captured stag's wounds only presented the bare plaster. The balmy summer air, however, which was ripening the vines and fig trees, had dried up all humidity.

THE GARDEN.

A profusion of vines, some trellising, others cut close down, numberless bunches of grapes; various sorts of fruit trees trained on espaliers; melons, in perfection, in the open air. A fountain formed by a young gentleman, made of lead, in a state of nudity, and painted after nature, spouting a small stream of water into a large cockleshell. Endive, sorrel, and spinach, in abundance; large onions, and garlic, *ditto;* an armed grenadier, painted on the wall, to frighten away the crows.

MADAME GARIGUES' COSTUME.

A black silk petticoat, with a red and white calico border; cherry-coloured stays, trimmed with blue and silver; a red and dove-coloured damask gown, flowered with large trees; a yellow satin apron, trimmed with white Persian; muslin head cloths, with crow-foot edging; double ruffles, with fine edging; a black silk furbelowed scarf, a spotted hood, and white calimanco shoes.

THE DINNER.

Although it was a saint's day, Monsieur Garigues would not be so inhospitable as to invite a diamond merchant to dine on *maigre* fare. So he stifled his religious scruples, and unpacked from the basket a boar's head, dressed on the most *recherché* principles; a cold raised pie of partridge, pheasant, hare, duck, and pigeons, with a cement forcemeat of veal, bacon, and savoury herbs; a jar of most delicious pickled tunny from the Mediterranean; and these, with an exquisite fresh salad from the garden, formed the main part of the repast. Bread and Bordeaux at *discretion;* and so the sequel will prove,

Madame Garigues was as gay in her conversation as she was gaudy in her apparel, and took a thousand opportunities to display her charms, GRATIS; which word, by the way, is so foreign to French manners and customs, that it has been borrowed from a dead language.

The jeweller was all bustle and hospitality,

and his gasconades were infinitely amusing, after a few tumblers of his admirable wine had been discussed; but, alas! the Bordeaux was not taken at *discretion*.

It is the custom in the south of France, doubtless derived from their Spanish neighbours, to take a siesta after dinner; to aid the digestion of a plentiful meal Madame Garigues stepped gracefully into an adjoining apartment to repose on the sofa. As a matter of course Cartouche was seized with yawning sensations, which were certainly catching, as the old fat Gascon opened his mouth to that width that Louis Dominique expected his head to come in two parts.

Cartouche professed to keep the jeweller company in an arm-chair near him. By some chance or other, though apparently fast asleep, Cartouche remained "wide awake," and just as his friend Garigues began to snore heavily, he leaned forward in his seat, and felt some curiosity as to the way in which the key of the iron-safe was deposited in his waistcoat pocket. With

great dexterity, he, with a sharp knife cut through the riband by which the key was attached and worn round the jeweller's fat neck. Just as he had obtained the coveted possession of the key, he unluckily with his elbow overturned an empty wine-bottle on the table, but, at the same moment, he fell back *fast asleep* in his chair; through the crevices of his eyelids he saw Garigues arouse, stare stupidly around, and then recline again without discovering his loss.

Cartouche, breathless and on tip-toe, stole out of the saloon (he was accustomed to *stealing*); he crossed the little hall, and entered the garden, in a small pavilion of which he found the gardener, who also acted as groom, fast asleep like the rest, so, thinking it a pity to disturb him after his fatigues and labours, he entered the stable, and coolly began to harness the roan with blue eyes, which had already done its duty so well, and was munching some fresh cut fodder. The poor beast did not seem exactly to understand why he should so soon

return to town, looking as if he would much rather have been put on the *rack*. If that was his equinine desire, Cartouche provided an excellent substitute for it in the *whip*, which he used most unmercifully after he had driven the old rattling cabriolet into the high road; on, on, he urged poor blue eyes, till his flanks reeked with perspiration, and his fine white mane and tail dripped in a most dishevelled manner. He boldly drove up to the shop-door, in the Rue de l'Intendance, and rung the bell. An old *employé*, who acted as an assistant to Monsieur Garigues, and the female servant, appeared, and were amazingly surprised to behold the horse and cabriolet, without master or mistress.

"Fly, *mes amis*," said Cartouche, in a tone of great concern, "Fly for the doctor! Monsieur Garigues has fallen into a bad fit, but his life may still be saved!"

He put the reins into the hands of the shopman, who was all nervously aghast at hearing

the misfortune which had befallen his master. "Go you, Margot," said he to the female, "for another medical man, in case your own doctor should be out. If dispatch be used, we may yet save his valuable life; no time is to be lost. I will remain here with the horse."

The two terrified domestics scuttled off in different directions, without waiting to reflect, in search of the doctors. The instant their backs were turned, Cartouche entered the premises, made his way to the *safe*, and was not long in possessing himself of the *ecrin* of her Majesty of Spain, and of his own (De Groc's) diamond, with several others into the bargain. He then carefully re-locked the iron safe, and decamped, dropping the key into the Garonne, as he crossed the wooden bridge to La Bastide, on the opposite shore. Mounting the aclivity he frequently turned round, but not to admire the truly oriental magnificence of the large city now in mid-distance, with its long lines of mercantile palaces and pleasure-grounds, glowing in

the glorious sunset, and glassed in the rapid-rolling Garonne. He turned to see if any stray vehicle might offer him the means of pursuing his route to Paris; he was kept in a state of suspense for some time, when, ascending the hill, a courier approached leading two spare horses, and wearing the livery of the Duke de Nivernois. This was a lucky rencontre. Cartouche stopped the courier, and told him that the diligence had gone off without him. Some louis-d'ors were produced, a bargain was soon struck; a roquelaire was unstrapped from behind the courier, and quickly enveloped the person of Cartouche. The courier's route was not the direct one to Paris—all the better; and, dashing off to the left, they soon reached Bergerac, where they refreshed themselves and cattle; and then crossing through the wooded plains of La Gratsege, they reached on the following day the old city of Chateau-neuf.

To return to Monsieur and Madame Garigues (which Cartouche neglected to do). The lady

first awoke from her siesta; she occupied some little time before a mirror, in putting her hair in proper trim, for her cap was a little displaced by the nodding in the nap in which she had indulged. The next movement was to take from her pocket a small *papier-maché* box of rouge, with which she slightly renovated each cheek with a bit of Spanish wool. Her next care was to look that her shoes and stockings were in proper order. She then made a pretty fluttering trip into the next room, and beheld Monsieur her husband in full snore. She supposed that the diamond merchant had sauntered into the garden.

She resolved to wait a few minutes. She then went into the pleasure-ground, where she suddenly met the gardener, rubbing his eyes, and in a state of great perplexity. He had most unaccountably missed the roan horse and cabriolet. Madame was much puzzled.

Garigues, with the fumes of the wine, was dreaming that he had been ushered into the presence of her Majesty the Queen of Spain, and

was on his knees before her, exhibiting his magnificent manufacture, the *ecrin:* when his wife entered, and rather roughly shook him to awake him.

"So, please your Majesty," said he, "be not angry; I could not get it completed earlier, humbly craving your Majesty's pardon."

Madame again shook him, and pinched his ear and his nose to awake him; but when the confused state of intellect, usually produced after sleeping on a full meal, had partially subsided, and he found that his guest and the cabriolet had vanished, his heart misgave him. He then instinctively felt for the key of the iron-safe—it was gone!

"*Diantre! mille Diantres!*" roared Garigues, foaming at the mouth; and when a Frenchman chooses to swear, or execrate, with what perfection he accomplishes it! how he grinds and rattles the letter *r* in his throat!

Garigues dashed his full bottomed powdered peruke at the gardener, stamped with both feet

on it, then picked up the peruke again, and hurled it at his wife; the effect of which was like that of an avalanche falling on an unoffending village.

"*Que je suis melon!** the *méchant!* the the robber! the *ecrin!* What will the Queen of Spain say or do? Ruined! ruined!"—and here the unhappy jeweller dashed his wig through the window into the little leaden boy's water-fall, and then seizing a garden-spade, he flourished it, exclaiming—

"War! war! to the *knife!*"

Madame Garigues was *au désespoir.*

* *Melon* (Gascon) *Imbecile.*

CHAPTER IX.

CARTOUCHE ACCIDENTALLY FALLS INTO THE PRESENCE OF A COUNTESS—HE FALLS IN LOVE WITH HER—HE ASSUMES NOBILITY—HE ENCOUNTERS TWO OLD ACQUAINTANCES, WHOM HE CONTRIVES TO MYSTIFY—THE COUNTESS CONSENTS TO TRAVEL WITH HIM TO THE CAPITAL.

THE courier here having to bait his master's well-bred horses, Cartouche took the opportunity, being in possession of a well-filled purse, to make his way to a dealer in clothes in the Grand Rue, where he purchased a complete change of apparel, the most splendid he could procure. He also bought a new auburn peruke with which he had fallen in love. These he placed in a commodious valise, and returning to the inn, greased the wheels of the conscience of the courier of the Duke de Nivernois with an-

other louis d'or, stipulating that he should let him ride one of the spare steeds on to Bourbon.

As they journeyed on they overtook a carriage in which was a young lady of considerable beauty, attended only by an elderly female, whose dress did not denote her as a servant, but seemed more to resemble that of a companion or *gouvernante*.

Louis Dominique was particularly struck with a certain charming arch expression of the eyes of the fair traveller, and contrived several times to gaze with an air of the most profound respect into the carriage, when he was vain enough to imagine that he had not entirely been unnoticed.

French roads at the period we are describing, required strong-built carriages: and though the administration of the Grand Monarque had done much to improve the highways, there was still considerable room for amendment. In dragging heavily up a hill, one of the axle-trees of the coach in which the ladies were seated, broke with a crash that alarmed the inmates. The

postilion leaped out of his huge portmanteau-looking boots, and instantly set about repairing the accident. Cartouche immediately rode up, and gallantly asked the ladies if he could be of any service. Seeing that the carriage was broken down, they accepted his offer of assistance to alight, and Louis Dominique's heart beat as he discovered that the closer he approached the younger female the handsomer she appeared.

The driver, in a *patois* of extreme volubility, apologised for the misfortune, saying that he had never done the like before in his life.

"You have overturned the carriage as cleverly as if you had done it a hundred times," replied Cartouche.

However, there was nothing to be done without the assistance of a smith. The postilion said there was a forge about a mile further on; so Cartouche told the courier to ride on to prepare the artisan in iron to get his implements ready, while the postilion walked by the side of his horses, and Cartouche and the ladies ap-

peared to be attending as mourners at the funeral of the broken coach.

Cartouche had observed the ladies glance with some curiosity at the emblazoned arms of Nivernois on the housings of the steeds, and a cunning thought spread itself across his fertile brain.

The weather being delightfully fine, Cartouche trusted that the ladies were not incommoded by being obliged to walk the distance. He then suddenly, in a rather careless tone, said, "I shall stay at Bourbon for a day or so. *My horses and courier* may go on to Nivernois."

At this point, the manner of the two ladies very much changed, and they answered the queries of Cartouche in a vivacious, but most respectful tone. The cunning rascal immediately perceived that he had impressed them with the idea that he was a person of rank; nay, that he might turn out to be the Duke de Nivernois himself.

After a delightful hour's chat, the damage of the coach was sufficiently repaired to enable the

ladies to continue their journey; Cartouche remounted the Duke's steed, and occasionally addressed a few agreeable remarks at the carriage window.

The party now approached the banks of the Allier, and were speedily in the valley, surrounded by steep hills, which forms the approach to the town of Bourbon; they passed the old castle, once the stronghold of the Sires of Bourbon, and admired the chapel with its exquisite stained glass casements.

Rattling through several streets, the carriage drew up at the hotel, the Coq d'Or; Cartouche politely handed his new acquaintances from their coach. He then dismissed the courier of the Duke de Nivernois (who bowed most ceremoniously on riding away) with another gold piece: and a *garçon* preceded Cartouche into the hotel, bearing his valise: here, securing a chamber, he unpacked the trunk, and adorned himself in his splendid suit, and new flowing peruke, and having hung on his sword with a

jaunty air, with his hat under his arm, he most impudently found his way into the saloon, where the *table d'hôte* was laid out. Presently, to his great satisfaction, he perceived his fair fellow traveller and her companion enter the room, and observed that they had also changed their dresses for a very becoming costume; Cartouche seated himself next them at dinner. Good cheer and good wine are admirable adjuncts to conversation, and the trio soon became agreeably communicative. The young lady described herself as the Countess de Bergerac, proceeding to Paris to receive the fortune left by her maternal uncle, a *fermier general*, who had died immensely rich. She appeared to be intimately connected with persons of high rank, many of whose names she mentioned, inquiring if Cartouche was acquainted with them. Louis Dominique, of course, answered in the affirmative, though Heaven knows he had never been in the position in life to have heard of them.

A dish of green peas being placed before the

party at table, the elder lady smiled graciously, and said, "My dear Countess, I never see green peas, without thinking of the gallantry of your rejected lover, the great *financier*."

The Countess affected to have forgotten the story, but as Cartouche (we beg pardon, the Duke de Nivernois) had never heard it, he begged Madame would be good enough to relate the circumstance.

"The *financier*, who was the very humble servant of the Countess," continued the old lady, "was aware that she was desirous to eat the first green peas of the season, so he one day bought her a dish for which he paid one hundred crowns."

"Dear, for peas," said Louis Dominique.

"'Alas! monsieur,' said the Countess to the *financier*, 'I cannot avail myself of your attention; my physician has put me on a milk diet.'

"'Well, Madame,' answered he gallantly, 'there is a remedy for every evil.'

"So he caused the peas, for which he had paid

one hundred crowns, to be given to the cow from which she had her milk."

"What tender sentiment," said Cartouche, "what a devoted lover! That is precisely the conduct I should pursue to the lady who would honour me with her affections."

The Countess fixed her beautiful eyes on Louis Dominique, and remarked, "But I did not honour him with my affections."

Cartouche rapidly thought within himself, "The more fool you; that *financier* should have been a cow that I would have milked thoroughly dry." The hours passed rapidly, the Duke de Nivernois ordered a *petit souper* in his own apartments, and the Countess de Bergerac and her *gouvernante*, after some slight scruples, accepted his invitation to pass the remainder of the evening there, prior to retiring to rest.

Cartouche was animated. A fine woman and his own fine clothes had wrought a wonderful effect on him. He felt tolerably certain that he had, for the present, eluded the vigilance of

the police of Bordeaux and Bayonne—and as for the representative of the latter, his old friend Sebastien Escroc, he did not care a solitary *liard*.

Prompted by vanity, and thinking to ingratiate himself with the beautiful Countess, he produced for inspection the three diamonds, at the sight of which both ladies were entranced; indeed, Cartouche thought that they would never take their eyes away from them. Cartouche now turned the attention of the ladies as to their mode of travelling on the following day, and vowed that to proceed in the damaged vehicle would be a dangerous experiment; he then stated that he was going on to Paris, on some private business, and for that purpose he had dismissed his courier and horses to Nivernois. He proposed that he should hire a *chaise de poste*, and that they would do him the honour to accept of seats therein.

Here both ladies remonstrated; their charac-

ters, the character of the family, might be ruined for ever. Cartouche was politely determined; and at length the Countess de Bergerac somewhat reluctantly acceded, on condition, that within ten miles of Paris, their new friend must quit them, as she had to meet Monsieur de Monnopet (the administrator under the will of her late uncle), and Monsieur le Marquis D'Aigue Blanche, and the Count de Viry, her cousins. To this arrangement, Louis Dominique, with a sigh, consented.

While they were enjoying a delicate supper of some *soupe à la Reine*, larded partridges, and stewed trout, from the river *Barge*, and washing it down with the most delicious Monrachet, the functionary Sebastien Escroc, arrived at the Coq D'Or. He had not, by any professional sagacity, taken this route in pursuit of his game, but almost by chance made his way to Bourbon. His first inquiry of the landlord of the Coq D'Or was as to the persons in his house, their quality, or profession. The landlord, who had

witnessed the arrival and departure of the Duke's courier and horses, at once (elevated with the notion of entertaining a nobleman of distinction on his premises), announced that the Duke de Nivernois and two ladies of rank sojourned in his hotel.

Warmed with the generous wine, Cartouche became more and more confident; and he was quite convinced in his own mind that he had made a very serious impression on the heart of the young *millionaire* — so serious indeed, that his offer of marriage was listened to blushingly, and in silence. He felt triumphant that he had not neglected a golden opportunity.

The ladies, after many tender adieux had been exchanged, retired to their chamber for the night.

After they had gone, he reflected that now indeed he was in the main road to fortune; he had captured the heart of a lovely, wealthy, interesting young creature (to use his own phrase), in little more than a "brace of shakes."

It was yet too early for Cartouche to retire to rest; and, somewhat excited by the Monrachet nectar, of which he had partaken sufficient to make him as bold and as cunning as Beelzebub, he resolved to go down to the saloon, and enact the Duke therein. Louis Dominique descended; but when he entered, he, at once, cursed his arrogant folly, for he instantly observed, among some dozen sojourners of the hotel who were sipping their coffee, liqueurs, and orgeat, two old acquaintances—the one was Monsieur Sebastien Escroc, and the other no less than the Principal of Clermont College, the Abbé Potter, his hated *ci-devant* schoolmaster, whose stripes rose up in all their smarting and original malignity, and warranted (to Cartouche) any equivalent revenge that he might exercise. He was aware that he was well disguised, and he was so grown in stature, and altered in appearance, that it may well be supposed that he was utterly unknown to the worthy superior of the Jesuits' College. As for Escroc, why he had deceived

him before, and he had very little fear that he should *do* him again; so, instead of retreating from the apartment, with the coolness and effrontery for which Cartouche was remarkable, he seated himself at the same table, at a little distance from the police-officer, who was discussing a dish of stewed lentils for his supper. On perceiving a person of so showy a figure, Sebastien Escroc whispered an inquiry into the ear of the *garçon* as to who he was? when the waiter replied that it was the Duke de Nivernois.

Cartouche was quite at his ease. He ordered some Maraschino, and a *caraffe* of iced water.

The Duke de Nivernois entered into conversation with Escroc; spoke of the exceedingly unsafe state of the public roads, the frequent robberies, the necessity of a more numerous police. He intimated that he had suffered materially on his own estates; that his sheep and cattle had been stolen, and that vast depredations had been made on his forests, and on the game. He further

stated that he had been for a considerable time on the look out for a clever intelligent person, to whom he might offer a liberal stipend, to head a force of his tenants and vassals, to extirpate the thieves, and protect his property.

Monsieur Sebastien Escroc's pig-eyes glistened and winked. Bowing very low, with his moustaches dipped into the plate of lentils, he said, with profound reverence, "Monsieur Le Duc should be informed that the person he has done the honour to address, holds the office of a *chef de la police* of Bayonne."

"Aye, indeed!" replied the Duke. "I recollect my intimate friend, the principal judge of the criminal court, telling me that robbery was a rarity at Bayonne, and was rendered so by the activity of one Mescro, or Pesco, or Questocq, or some such name."

"Escroc is my name," said the oaf of a functionary, with another humble bow.

The Duke produced his tablets, and requested that Monsieur Escroc would write his

name and address thereon; and that, in all probability, he would hear of something greatly to his advantage.

Completely blinded, the officer having inserted his autograph, proceeded to relate anecdotes of his extreme activity in the service of justice, and that he had been so successful, only one rogue had escaped him, and he had driven him out of Bayonne—this rogue was one Louis Dominiqne Cartouche. He also highly amused the hero of our story with a rather lengthened detail of the exploits of this same delinquent; some of them, indeed, so highly coloured, that once or twice Louis Dominique had it on the tip of his tongue to contradict him, and cry out, "Oh, what an abominable lie."

Monsieur Escroc then stated to the Duke that in a few hours he should start for Paris, where he hoped to pounce on Cartouche. The Duke de Nivernois inquired with great *sang froid*, if Escroc knew the person of this same Cartouche?—to which the intelligent

officer replied, "Oh, perfectly well, perfectly well!"

Louis Dominique grew tired of this babbler, who had told him all that he thought, and all that he knew. When that subject failed him, he told all that he did not know.

The Duke, therefore, bade him adieu, and wished him all possible success, though, for his own part, he feared that Monsieur Sebastien Escroc was a trifle *too sanguine*.

The police-officer then went to the stable to see his horse fed.

The Abbé Potter had been an attentive listener at the next table to the fore-mentioned conversation; and, turning to the supposed nobleman, who was now disengaged, said, "I beg your pardon, Monsieur, you mentioned the name of the Duke de Nivernois?"

"I did," replied Cartouche, guardedly.

"I hope the Duke is quite well?" said the Abbé.

"In just as good health as I am," answered Louis Dominique.

"I am extremely glad to hear that," continued the Abbé, "as I have the honour of his grace's friendship and patronage."

"The devil you have," thought Cartouche; "that is rather unlucky."

"Strange enough," said the Abbé Potter, who was rather loquaciously inclined, "that another name should have been accidentally mentioned this evening with which I have had some acquaintance."

"What name was that, Monsieur?"

"Cartouche," replied the Jesuit, "Louis Dominique Cartouche, once a student in Clermont College, now a criminal, of whom, it seems, the officers of justice are in pursuit; but who has committed no crime equal to that of disgracing the place of his education, of which I was the principal."

"I was not aware," continued our bare-faced impostor, "that I had the honour to be in company with the Abbé Potter, so renowned for his learning; and to whom we owe that startling

inquiry as to how many millions of angels can dance on the point of a needle! Such men are invaluable, and every arm should be raised to shield them from danger."

The Abbé meekly bent his head, and humbly trusted his "calling" would always protect him.

"I would not have you too sure, Monsieur L'Abbé," replied Louis Dominique, "for when at Chartres, a few days since, I was informed that the last act of this monster Cartouche was that of cutting out the tongue of a Jesuit who had villified him, and leaving him to bleed to death in the high road."

After this appalling communication, the good Abbé took an early opportunity of leaving the room, and retiring to repose, feeling a little feverish about the tongue.

"O! mischief, thou art swift
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!"

So said Shakspere; Cartouche perfectly agreed with him; and he resolved, after a fashion of his own, to make his two late companions, the

Abbé Potter and Monsieur Sebastien Escroc, better acquainted with each other. He had in the course of conversation ascertained that they were pursuing the same route towards the capital; so he retired to his chamber, and wrote, in a large and disguised hand, on a sheet of paper:—

"You have this day been in the presence of Cartouche, who came to Bourbon, with a plan to rob, if not to murder, the Abbé Potter. Cartouche will proceed in a hired carriage with four horses to Paris, disguised as the Abbé, to avoid detection; all this he has accomplished, but you may overtake him if you start instantly, keeping the high road.

(Signed) A Repentant Sinner."

Having overheard the Abbé order the carriage, &c., Cartouche rose at an early hour, and watched from his bed-room window to observe his departure; he presently descended into the street, to watch the motions of Sebastien Escroc,

who, having made a substantial *dejeuner à la fourchette*, was not ready to take his leave of the Coq d'Or until a considerable time after the Principal of Clermont had set off.

At last he mounted in his saddle, looked at his heavy pistols, and replaced them in the holsters: when a beggar-boy (dispatched by Cartouche, who was out of sight, but who had given his little messenger a gratuity) put the above admonitory note into the hand of the police-officer, and slipped away.

On reading this, Escroc was surprised, and much chagrined that his prey had again baffled him; and, without much further reflection, he resolved to re-commence a hot and vigorous pursuit.

Cartouche now sought the Countess de Bergerac and her companion, to propose that they should breakfast together. He found the Countess alone, attired in a very becoming morning dishabille, which disclosed to his enamoured vision a thousand new beauties. She stated that

her friend had gone forth early in the morning to her devotions, never allowing herself on any occasion to neglect the church.—"For my part," said the Countess, "religion is a very good thing in its way, but one may have too much of it."

"Particularly," replied Cartouche, "in the mode the service of the church is celebrated in this country; a great portion of it has been composed in Hebrew, and translated into Latin, for the benefit and use of those who understand neither the one nor the other."

"I assure you I am not one of those who undertake to torment themselves in this world in order to be saved in the next; nor do I see the utility of devoting yourself to salted fish on certain days of the week," said the Countess.

"Exactly my notions on the subject, my dear Countess," exclaimed Cartouche. "But still the practice is very necessary to support the commerce of the heretics who have fisheries at Newfoundland."

After expatiating on a few more liberal doctrines, Louis Dominique requested permission to remove one of the little black patches with which the Countess had decorated her face from its station above her left eye-brow, to the side of the dimple on her chin; while thus employed, he could not refrain from *stealing*—a kiss.

The *gouvernante* entered at that moment with her beads in her hand. She started; the Countess appeared confused; and the old lady, with a solemnity of utterance that was quite startling, said,

> "Woman, like china, should be kept with care,
> One flaw debases her to common *ware*."

Cartouche acknowledged the perfect truth of the distich, which he begged the *gouvernante* again to repeat, that he might transcribe it on his tablets, and impress it on his memory. On opening the tablets, however, the first thing that presented itself to his sight, was the formal handwriting of "*Sebastien Escroc, officier de*

la Cour Criminale, Bayonne." So he hastily shut them up again.

We will leave Cartouche and the ladies at breakfast, where he again exhibited his diamonds without the slightest compunction as to what her Majesty of Spain would deign to do with the unfortunate Garigues, or the least care whether the worthy jeweller had taken any steps to regain the stolen property. In the meantime Escroc rode on in the hope of overtaking the Abbé Potter's carriage, which, travelling with fresh post-horses, rendered the task of the police-officer a difficulty. He, however, perseveringly trotted throughout the day, tracing the coach and its inmate from Poste Royale to Poste Royale, but always four hours too late. At length he discovered that this mode of proceeding would not be likely to answer, so he hired a *calèche*, and ordering post-horses, he unluckily obtained a pair that had to be fetched from plough, and where a stiff soil all the morning had taken the pluck out of them. In spite of

this delay, Monsieur Sebastien Escroc made considerable progress while the Abbé slept for some hours at an inn. He followed him to the town of Melun, which is about twenty-eight miles south-east of Paris. Here, finding again that the supposed Cartouche had got the start of him, he made his way to the ancient Benedictine Abbey, which was the residence of the prefect, who ordered two dragoons on fast horses, to ride rapidly to the intendant of police at Paris, and announce the matter, and to make all due preparation for the arrest of the robber Cartouche in the disguise of the Abbé. The dragoons were so diligent that on the arrival of the carriage it was instantly surrounded by exempts of the police; and, on the door being opened, there sat, palpably enough, the person described. He was much agitated, and well he might be, under the circumstances; for the roughness with which he was dragged out, put into irons, and locked up in one of the strongest dungeons of the Conciergerie, was not calculated to promote

his serenity. On the following morning, the prisoner was taken out of his *cachot*, and brought up for examination. All eyes were fixed on the culprit, and intense excitement prevailed, when, to the great amusement of the assembled crowd, and the equal mortification of the officers of police, he was discovered *not* to be Cartouche, but was veritably identified as the Abbé Potter.

As a matter of course, a man of the learned Abbé's distinction was not to be so grossly insulted with impunity, and a strict investigation of the affair took place. The dragoons who brought the information were committed to prison, and orders were issued for the arrest of Monsieur Sebastien Escroc, who was met within a few miles of Paris, and conveyed to the Conciergerie, to his utter dismay and astonishment.

Cartouche chuckled within himself at the probable success of a scheme by which his *ci-devant* tyrant might be almost frightened out of his senses, and his pursuer put on a wrong scent. He was in gay spirits, for had he not

subjugated the heart of one of the loveliest and richest of her sex? Was he not soon to become the possessor of wealth and power sufficient to silence the scruples of the sternest stuff in the shape of a minister of police? The prospect was enchanting, but on the safety of the day depended the glories of the morrow.

As the Countess de Bergerac had condescended to consent to travel in the same carriage with him, he thought he would give her a proof of his entire confidence by requesting her to take charge of the valuable diamonds in her jewel-box; a mark of reliance which the eyes of both the elder and young lady showed was highly appreciated. On their journey, the *gouvernante* frequently indulged in a brief nap, during which the lovers enjoyed numberless innocent caresses. The *gouvernante* was, indeed, a very agreeable and discreet travelling companion, for she possessed the art, in perfection, of being blind with one eye, and not being able to see out of the other.

But, alas! bliss is fleeting. On arriving near the capital, Cartouche was told by the lovely Countess that he must quit the carriage, at the end of the next stage, for the sake of her character, as she was to meet Monsieur Monnopet, the administrator, at the hotel in the small town of Rambouillet. But she said to him with great tenderness, "When I am put in possession of my fortune, I shall be perfectly my own mistress; and then you can follow me like a true knight-errant to Rambouillet, and demand me as your bride." With that, she begged of him to get out of the coach, and gave him her beautiful hand to kiss. The door of the carriage was closed, and off trotted the horses. Cartouche gazed after the vehicle that bore away his prize!

When the carriage was nearly out of sight, Cartouche recollected that his valise was in it, and he breathed a fond hope that his beloved Countess would not forget to take great care of the diamonds. He determined now to leisurely

make his way along the high-road until he came to the turning that led to Rambouillet.

He felt that the "Duke de Nivernois" was very speedily to be introduced (as the lovely Countess had informed him during the intervals of their toying in the coach) to the families of the Bouillons, the Penthièvres, the Crequis, the Lauzuns, the Montmorencies, &c., although the fair lady herself frankly informed him that her own family connections were chiefly among the aristocracy of wealth.

"Give me the mopuses, and let anybody else have the nobility," said Cartouche. "I shall be master of a rent-roll of 400,000 francs, and with that where would be the difficulty of making even a Countess happy?"

At this moment he heard the tramp of several horses behind him, and turning his head, four persons mounted, appeared, coming on at a brisk trot; Cartouche was blessed with a very keen sight, and he was not quite satisfied with the armed array of three of the riders, so he took

the precaution, notwithstanding his gay costume, to leap into a small gravel pit, overhung by bushes, but wherein he could observe, without the disadvantage of being seen. Situated as he was, he could with difficulty repress his laughter when the cavalcade passed, which consisted of Monsieur Sebastien Escroc strapped on his horse, and handcuffed, guarded by three police-officers, each with his finger on the lock of his arquebuss. He now absolutely gloried in the success of his scheme, for he was assured, by the melancholy spectacle before his eyes, that it had not failed.

Cartouche remained in his ambuscade until he no longer heard the hoofs of the horses, when he proceeded on his route to Rambouillet, full of high hope.

> "Hope! fortune's cheating lottery!
> Where for one prize a hundred blanks there be;
> Fond archer, Hope! who tak'st thy aim so far,
> That still or short or wide thine arrows are!"

CHAPTER X.

CARTOUCHE MEETS WITH TWO OLD FRIENDS, AND A DISAPPOINTMENT—RELINQUISHES DEALING IN DIAMONDS—HE RETURNS TO PARIS, AND ROBS A USURER—IS INTRODUCED INTO AGREEABLE SOCIETY—BUT IS OBLIGED TO REMAIN IN-DOORS.

The weather was fine, the breeze balmy, the larks were pouring forth their melody to the clear air, in rivalry, as they ascended higher and higher. Cartouche compared himself to a lark, and commenced a blithe song; he felt certain that he was going up in the world, and once in possession of the lovely Countess, her fortune would place him as near to heaven as he wished to be at his time of life. So he continued to stride on until he reached the road which turned off to Rambouillet, where he was to rejoin the

object of his affections, and to be introduced to Monsieur Monnopet, the Marquis de Viry, and other noble friends of his betrothed. He arrived at the gateway of the hotel at Rambouillet, where, to his mortification, he recognised two of his early associates, Thibault au Dé and Inigo, who, it will be remembered, were among the company assembled in honour of poor Monsieur Malastéque's wedding, and who walked off with the spoons and forks. Cartouche was considerably embarrassed at meeting with these unlucky dogs at this moment, although they were exceedingly well dressed. He endeavoured to avoid them, but they recognised him, approached, and repeatedly embraced him. But in the midst of these proofs of their old friendship, their profession was not forgotten nor neglected, for during the warmth of their caresses, Monsieur Thibault au Dé contrived to unfasten a large showy brooch that graced the cravat of Cartouche, while Inigo dexterously cleared the *tabatière* from his waistcoat-pocket.

Cartouche, although he felt compelled to make an exterior show of civility, yet, at the same time, wished his two friends at the farthest extremity of the bottomless pit. He made inquiry as to whether they knew if the Marquis d'Aigue Blanche and the Count de Viry were in the hotel, as he had particular business with them.

At this question the two thieves burst out into ungovernable laughter, and were compelled to hold the gate-posts to prevent their falling into the street.

Cartouche innocently asked the meaning of their merriment, when Inigo, taking Thibault by the hand, bowed low to Louis Dominique, and said, "Permit me to introduce to your notice the Marquis d'Aigue Blanche." Cartouche stared incredulously.

Thibault au Dé now bowed in his turn, and said, "Monsieur Cartouche, allow me the honour to present Count Viry to you," as he led Inigo towards him.

With a half-choked voice Cartouche stam-

mered out, "Have two ladies arrived hither in a carriage—the—the Countess de Bergerac?"

"Oh, yes," replied Thibault au Dé, winking.

"Where are they?" asked Cartouche, turning pale.

"Gone on to Paris," said Inigo, "and hark ye, my boy, we will let you into a secret. We are all out *flat*-catching, ladies and all; they have made a profitable trip from Bordeaux. We are at present on the watch for a gull. We have got into our net no less a person than the young Duke de Nivernois."

"Have you?" ejaculated Cartouche, "then my diamonds are gone, never more to return." He now gave way to a fit of passion, for a sharper never loses his temper more than when he discovers that he has been outwitted. His friends roared with laughter, on gradually drawing forth his adventure, and pronounced him to be an extremely clever fellow; but, notwithstanding his tact, he had suffered cleverer thieves in petticoats to get the advantage of him.

Cartouche sighed when he contrasted his sanguine hopes with the present change of affairs. He really regretted the loss of the false Countess, but admitted that the lady-*gouvernante* had added much to the deception by going to church so early in the morning.

"What, ha! ha! old Mother Mion de Boule!* She is indeed a first-rate *artiste*," said Thibault au Dé. "Thou art as yet but a novice when compared with those who have so recently relieved thee of thy superfluous wealth. But be of good heart, thou hast still an excellent suit of clothes, and a bold unembarrassed air; so join our band, and accompany us to Paris, where we will provide thee with free quarters until thou art again in fit condition to be plucked."

Cartouche cursed his ill-fortune; but, ever bent on making the best of a bad bargain, he resolved to return to the capital, where, for

* *Argot.* Cut-purse.

a time at least, he felt assured that he was not known to the police authorites, and it could be only the failure of some eminent stroke in the professional way that could obtain him an introduction to them.

Monsieur Thibault au Dé and Monsieur Inigo, after a plentiful meal at the hotel, in which Cartouche participated—for misfrotune, although she had deprived him of his ill-gotten treasure, could not dismember his appetite—proposed that they should journey back to Paris.

"In the meantime," whispered the illustrious Thibault, "as we have sent a Countess from the hotel, and we have the Duke de Nivernois in company, I consider *that* to be quite a sufficient honour to this house of entertainment, without troubling ourselves to pay the bill."

Inigo agreed with his friend, and said that "the presence of '*the Duke*' at their dinner really edified him; indeed, it was "*his* GRACE *after meat!*"

After a proper quantity of wine, and on Cartouche declining to take any more, he was politely requested by Thibault au Dé to walk forth quietly to gain the high road to Paris; and leave them to bilk the landlord of the hotel. So Cartouche arranged his peruke, cocked his hat, smoothed his ruffles, and departed; as he passed the hostess he bowed and smiled, and strutted out; but on arranging his cravat he missed his brooch, and this loss occasioned him to feel for his snuff-box, which he found he could not find; he, however, went on.

Presently Inigo rapped with the handle of a knife against a wine-glass, and on the appearance of the landlord (who acted as his own waiter), the sharper somewhat authoratively ordered the bill. When they heard their host re-entering the saloon with the little account in his hand, Thibault au Dé said, "No, Count Vity, no; if we took such a gross liberty the Duke de Nivernois would never pardon us—nay, never invite us again."

"True," replied Inigo, "I really forgot that we had the honour to be his guests, or I should not have proposed to pay."

"His grace sleeps here to-night," continued Thibault; and then, affecting to see the innkeeper, he inquired if the Duke de Nivernois had ordered his bed-chamber to be prepared.

On hearing that the Duke had forgotten to do so, Thibault au Dé carelessly remarked, "Ah! ah! it is always the way with these noblemen of high rank, who are so surrounded by *maitres d'hotel*, gentlemen ushers, and *valets-de-chambre*, that they utterly forget, or neglect, their commonest wants.

"Good Heaven!" said Inigo, "suppose the Duke, in travelling without his domestics, should have been put into a damp bed!"

"It pains me to think of it," replied Thibault, shrugging his shoulder, "but I should imagine that in a hotel of this respectability such an event would be quite impossible."

The landlord, here feeling his professional

character at stake, remarked, "That although he was aware that it was the common practice at inns merely to sprinkle the sheets with water, between the occupation of one lodger and his immediate successor, that his *femmes-de-chambre* had positive and peremptory directions to serve each guest with clean bed-linen, perfumed with lavender."

"Monsieur," said Inigo, with a patronising smile, "this sort of dealing is the sure mode of keeping up the custom of your hotel, with persons of consideration. But let us seek the Duke."

"His grace was a little out of appetite at dinner," continued the artful rogue Thibault. "He will doubtless be hungry at supper time. Have you any delicacy in your house, Monsieur?"

The landlord said that he had a very fine fresh cow's tongue which they could stew.

"An admirable dainty, truly," remarked Inigo, "pr'ythee get it ready by nine of the

clock; by that hour, with his walk, the Duke will have regained his stomach; we will join his grace until supper time."

And here these two scape-graces walked out arm-in-arm with the utmost composure.

It is hardly necessary to say that they sought their fellow vagabond, and each put his best foot forward towards Paris; while the inn-keeper and his *cara sposa* went hard to work, preparing the bed-chamber of the Duke de Nivernois, and concocting a racy stew of the tongue of an animal that had died of the cow-pock the previous day, and very feverish it was.

The three rogues wended their way sturdily along, but Cartouche was compelled to submit with an ill grace, to the innumerable gibes hurled at him by his comrades.

A professed jester, who cares not a straw about the feelings of those on whom he bestows his witticism or sarcasm, is always the most sensitive and thin-skinned person when a sharp joke is levelled at himself.

They were now looking out for some sort of carriage, in which they might be conveyed to the gates of Paris, when they were fortunately overtaken by one of those cars (more useful than ornamental) on which defunct horses are hoisted on their final transmission to the flayer's establishment. A bargain was soon made with the driver, who was on his road to the city, to bring away the corpse of a deceased palfrey; and the illustrous Duke de Nivernois, Count Viry, and Monsieur le Marquis D'Aigue Blanche, holding tight by each other, chatted merrily during the jolting of the car at a swing trot, until they arrived within a few hundred yards of the barriers of the capital. Here they deemed it prudent to part company, that they might make their entry at different gates, promising to rendezvous at the residence of Thibault au Dé.

We must now let our readers a little further into the history of the last mentioned worthy. Monsieur Thibault au Dé resided in a street of the same name, hard by the

Pont au Change. Whether he took his name from the street or not we cannot vouch authentically; at any rate, it was a convincing proof of his rank in the social scale of life. His profession was two-fold. He was captain of a small commonwealth of six highly finished gentlemen; and he was also an equally accomplished gambler with his grandfather (who was hanged) before him. Let it not be supposed, however, that this peculiar mode of exit caused his descendant any sense of shame or uneasiness; he was, on the contrary, proud of it, as only persons of gentle blood were favoured with the *sus. per col*, whereas low fellows were invariably broken upon the wheel.

Louis Dominique had arrived at the Pont au Change, which at that time presented a very singular structure, chiefly of wood, and having on either side a row of houses wearing all the forms of the picturesque peculiar to the mediœval ages; on one side were located, by royal ordonnance, all the money-changers, and

on the other, most of the goldsmiths of the good city of Paris. Having passed through the street "between wind and water," he came to the stands of the bird-sellers, who held their stalls by tenure, which enjoined that on the accession of a new monarch to the throne of France, they were to give liberty to some three hundred feathered prisoners. How characteristic of Parisian display! Here stood the figure of a man somewhat bent and spare, whose cold glassy eye seemed to express little interest in anything around him. His dress was plain, almost to poverty, and yet there was something in his mien which indicated a sense of power over others. This was the celebrated Nicholas Flamel, the usurer, who was stealthily taking his evening mouthful of fresh air, and pondering on the gains of the day. He was a grammatical calculator; as a money lender he would serve you in the present tense, he would discourse in the conditional mood, keep you in the subjunctive, and ruin you in the future. Gold was his idol;

the richer he became the fiercer burnt his passion of avarice, and its violence increased like a furnace in the same proportion with the quantity of combustible matter heaped on it as fuel. He had but one mistress, and that was Money; and, although desperately fond of her, he was afraid to touch her, lest he should take from her charms.

Whatever the cogitations of Nicholas Flamel might have been, they were speedily interrupted by the arrival of a religious procession, which wended its way along the Quai de Gesvres, in the direction of the cathedral of Notre Dame.

As a professed Catholic, the miser could not, of course, either look or express discontent with the doings of those who had the cure of souls; but he did nevertheless think that much of the ringing of bells, so many glittering crosses, and white-robed acolothists, and such an enormous quantity of smoking incense, all of which "cost money," were superfluous to any well-regulated establishment.

Nicholas Flamel compared his own household to the English watch in his pocket, which went well with the least possible quantity of oil; and which he said, chuckling to himself, "I have worn for twenty years, in spite of all the thieves in Paris." At this precise conjuncture, a slight swaying of the crowd of gazers at the procession brought some of the latter so close to him, that his toes were trodden on, and when the crowd retired, his watch retired with them.

With a somewhat quickened step, Cartouche was proceeding along the Quai, wholly unobservant of the glances of the pretty milliners, whose shops were there situated; and he walked still more rapidly as he entered the Rue St. Denis, regarding not for one instant that terrible prison-house the *Grand Châtelet*,* nor troubling himself with the romance of the "*Puits d'Amour*," in which a young lady did veritably drown herself for love in the thirteenth century.

* Formerly a fortress, and used as a protection against the English and Normans.

Presently Louis Dominique was seized forcibly by the arm, his unceremonious companion saying, "He wished to have a word with him." How this was to end Cartouche knew not, but he was perfectly collected, and walked on. At the corner of the *Rue de la Couture*, the stranger suddenly stopped. "My friend," said he to Cartouche, "your purse!"

"It is at the point of my sword," said Cartouche, drawing his weapon.

"Enough, my fine fellow," rejoined the other. "I wished to ascertain whether your courage was equal to your address." He then, in an under tone, continued, "I observed you to take a watch from that hard-hearted scoundrel, Nicholas Flamel, the usurer, whom it is a pleasure to rob, as he knows not how to deal as a gentleman."

Here Cartouche thought he recollected the sound of a voice he had heard before.

"It is reported," said the stranger, "that Nicholas Flamel sups nightly with the devil,

who has let him into the secret of making money fast; gold sticks to his fingers. You, by stealing his watch, have deprived him of the only thing he was ever known to give, namely, *the time of day*. All I want now is to give you, as a young man, a few words of advice; you are adroit, I wish to possess your friendship and confidence; we have met before."

Here the stranger abruptly quitted Cartouche, who was not at all satisfied. Might not this gentleman be a spy prepared to give him into the hands of the archers of the Guard, posted in the vicinity? Why did he leave him so suddenly? He soon discovered why. The stranger turning down a cross street which led to a mansion, before which stood several carriages, and where a number of smart lacqueys were kicking their heels, very shortly returned with a purse well filled. Drawing Cartouche to a corner, he offered a division of the spoil. On Louis Dominique expressing his surprise at

such a measure, the stranger said, "I owe thee some recompense; thou didst once treat me to a breakfast, and I repaid thee by robbing thee of thy suit of clothes; that change of apparel was the foundation of prosperity to me. I wish now to repay thee like a gentleman."

Cartouche looked into the face of his companion, and smiled as he recognised the shirtless cavalier!

"Come," said the latter, who was well dressed, "let me introduce thee to my home."

"Stay," answered Cartouche, "can you direct me to *la Rue Thibault au Dé?*"

"Most assuredly," replied the cavalier, "since I dwell there. May I make bold to inquire for whom you seek?"

"For Monsieur Thibault au Dé himself," replied Louis Dominique.

"Have with you, then, for that first-rate professor is of our fraternity, let me conduct you to him."

This proposal at once obliterated any suspi-

cion that remained in the mind of Cartouche, and he followed his acquaintance through some half-dozen obscure streets, skirted with tall gloomy houses, chiefly built of stone. It was almost dark, for the lanterns (exchanged for the open *falots* in 1677) were only ordered to be lighted from the 20th of October to the end of March.

At length they halted opposite to a house of somewhat dingy outward aspect, and entering, mounted up to the fifth story. Here was to be seen a door of considerable strength, in which a wicket was inserted, with a sliding panel.

On giving a peculiar knock, after a brief space, the shutter behind the wicket was withdrawn, and an eye glared through it; the glance was satisfactory, and the portal was unbolted.

The cavalier and Cartouche were admitted to a bare-looking, meanly-furnished apartment. This was the lodge of their janitress, a sinister-looking old woman, with a solitary orb of vision, whom the cavalier, in a bland tone of voice,

introduced as Madame Douce Esperance, a name of which she was evidently proud, on account of its appropriateness. After the outside door had been cautiously bolted and barred, the cavalier opened a sort of closet, in which were arranged various articles of earthenware, and invited Cartouche to follow him. Then the cavalier placed his hand on what appeared to be a window with a closed exterior shutter, which going back on hinges, admitted them into an ante-room, fitted up with some pretensions to comfort; passing onward, they entered a *salon*, which was furnished so luxuriously as to make it obvious that Monsieur Thibault au Dé carried on the diplomacy of his *bi-fold* profession to some purpose. Clocks, china, bijouterie, pictures, tapestries, ancient arms, were arranged tastefully: but nothing was of a piece, for there were no two chairs alike. Every article of furniture seemed to be selected frem various repositories, and collected into one depository.

Here Thibault and Inigo welcomed Cartouche and the shirtless cavalier, who was introduced under the name of Monsieur Bavarde de Tromperie, and who, now beholding Louis Dominique in a well-lighted apartment, begged to embrace him, and congratulated him on his improved appearance since he last had the honour of being in his company.

"Say and do what you please in these chambers," exclaimed Thibault au Dé, "these walls have no ears. I am delighted that you two *artistes* have met before. By St. Launcelot, we will have a night of it, and I must present you to Madame Thibault au Dé."

A female shortly made her appearance, showily dressed; she wore a great variety of ornaments—diamond, pearl, ruby, and emerald, and her clothes were of silk, satin, and velvet; she received Cartouche with a grace only to be assumed by French women.

"My wife," said Thibault. "Does not she look bravely? I pledge you my honour that

every article of apparel she wears, I stole with my own hands."

"Acknowledged like a gentleman," remarked the cavalier, as he approached Madame Thibault au Dé, and gallantly placed the purse he had recently purloined into her hands; not to be lacking in courtesy, Cartouche begged the lady to accept of an English watch, which, by a strange accident, had found its way into his possession; a hint that was commented on with much humour by Monsieur Bavarde de Tromperie, and which afforded infinite merriment to the whole party at the expense of old Nicholas Flamel, for whom de Tromperie owned that he felt a *compound interest.*

A celebrated critic has asserted that the man who will make a pun, will pick a pocket; now, fortunately, Bavarde de Tromperie could do both.

Supper being announced by Douce Esperance, the shirtless cavalier led the lady into an adjoining chamber, where soup, roasted pullets, and

other delicacies were laid out in profusion, to which, and sundry bottles of wine, the whole party did ample justice.

Then it was that Thibault au Dé entered upon the subject of their profession, and expressed his wonder that Cartouche, having acted without the concurrence of others, had escaped the thousand dangers which had beset him. It could only have been, he said, through singular good fortune that such had been the case.

"But is there no such thing as talent in the world?" asked de Tromperie.

"I will allow Monsieur Cartouche to possess talent, nay, genius," replied Thibault. "But, believe me, the assistance to be derived from accomplices is of the most valuable kind in diverting attention or creating tumult."

"Ah, my dear au Dé," said Madame, "how very effective we have found it, when you have knocked a man's hat, at one blow, over his eyes; *bonneting*, I think, you call it."

"True, my love," replied her husband. "But

I certainly should not advise Monsieur Cartouche to rely upon a continuance of such luck, but to associate himself with two or three friends of skilful habits."

"Dear me, my love," said Madame Thibault, what should I have done without your assistance? When I have taken an article, sometimes a cumbrous one, off the counters of our tradesmen, why you have stowed it away in no time. You call that *shop-lifting*, dear, do you not?"

"Yes, my love," said Thibault au Dé, with an air of gallantry, "and I acknowledge your great abilities, to which I have been very highly indebted. My wife—and proud, indeed, I am of her—can remove a clock while it is striking the hour, unobserved, unnoticed from the mantle-shelf of any premises."

Here an ornamental clock in the room began to chime—"Vouching for the truth; corroborative evidence, by my honour!" remarked the cavalier.

Inigo, chuckling with laughter, ventured to wonder whether the supper of the Duke de Nivernois was ready prepared at Rambouillet?

"Where are the diamonds," inwardly thought Cartouche. "Oh, that accursed false Countess!"

Monsieur Bavarde de Tromperie now solicited Madame to favour them with a song. She complied most graciously, and begged her husband to fetch her lute from the next room. On handing it to her, she touched it to find if it was in tune, and carelessly remarked, you "*nibbled* this guitar in the *Place des Victoires*, if my memory serves me, dear?"

"I did, my love," said Thibault.

The cavalier entreated that she would commence, and "ravish his ears."

"Do you then take Madame for the pillory?" asked Inigo.

"I have great sensibility as regards melody," continued de Tromperie, sighing; "happy is the parent whose son's eye is moistened with music!"

"Or brandy," replied Inigo.

"By the way," replied Thibault, "I forgot the brandy; let us have *un petit goût*," whereupon he poured out glasses all round.

Madame Thibault, on putting it to her lips, observed, "You *smugged* this in the *Rue St. Honoré*, love?"

"Quite right, again, my dear," replied the affectionate husband.

The lady having requested that her friends would join in chorus, commenced as follows:—

"J'entends un sage me dire
Que la gaité fait la santé ·
Buvons amis pour bien rire
Le vin inspire
La gaité.
"En débiteur insolvable
Je bois à mon creancier;
Sans peine on oublie à table
Ce qu'on ne saurait payer,
CHORUS—J'entends," &c.

It would be too much for the reader's patience to insert here the other fifteen verses of the song, which were duly chorussed with inspiriting effect.

The French are proverbially sober, but the party on this evening formed a slight exception to the general rule.

Inigo, who had travelled much in his day, and gained much experience and knowledge, asserted that in England they spelt "VIN" thus—"GIN."

We will leave them all to find their way to bed in the best manner they were able.

Robbing a crowned head is a very distinct matter from depredation on a commoner. And this soon became apparent, for poor Garigues having made the abstraction of the diamonds known at the court of Spain, Her Majesty was most indignant at the loss of her jewels, and the Spanish envoy at the French court was ordered to make a representation of the theft to the government. Monsieur d'Argenson, lieutenant of police at Paris, was instantly commanded to use every energy to recover the gems of the Spanish Queen.

The chemists and philosophers about that

period were anxiously examining into the nature of the diamond. Sir Isaac Newton, in 1673, had stated in his *Optics*, that from its great refracting power, the diamond must be combustible, and that it might be an unctuous substance coagulated. But the celebrated Averani, in 1695, in presence of the Grand Duke of Tuscany and several philosophers, showed, by concentrating the rays of the sun upon it, that the diamond was exhaled in vapour, and disappeared entirely.

The Queen of Spain, who did not much encourage scientific pursuits, formed a decided objection to her jewels being exhaled, and *entirely disappearing*.

The spies of the Parisian police were set to work in all directions. Old Nicholas Flamel, the usurer, who had purchased the stolen gems of Madame Mion de Boule (*gouvernante* to the supposed Countess de Bergerac), became alarmed, obtained an interview of Monsieur d'Argenson, and cunningly made terms with the

lieutenant of police for the repayment to him of the small sum he had advanced on the diamonds, which he delivered up: and putting the officers on the scent, the Countess and her *gouvernante* were soon lodged in the Conciergérie. The Queen of Spain's diamonds were restored to her Majesty, and Monsieur d'Argenson was pronounced to be a most admirable and efficient lieutenant of police.

A close description of Cartouche was printed and circulated over every part of the kingdom; he was therefore constrained for a time to remain a captive within the walls of the sanctuary of Thibault au Dê, where his days would have passed merrily enough, if, with the distrust always cankering in the bosom of a villain, he had not fancied that one day or other, either Thibault, Inigo, or Bavarde de Tromperie, would deliver him up to justice for the sake of the large reward offered for his apprehension.

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